THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST AS IT IS TODAY

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1. ENTRANCE TO PEACE RIVER TRAIL.
2. COOK'S PARTY ON PEACE RIVER TRAIL.
3. IN THIS LAND OF THE BUFFALO IS WHERE JIM COOK LIVES

MISS COOK.

IN OUR BOAT. THE HAPPY ROVER. HEAD OF SLAVE RIVER.
A STOP FOR LUNCH.

JIM M. COOK.
AS A TEXAS RANGER.

THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST AS IT IS TODAY.

By

JIM M. COOK.

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March 6, 1912.
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JIM M. COOK,
Los Angeles, California.

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PREFACE.

Where some have gone, others are sure to follow. To those I offer this book. If you would profit by the experience of those that have gone ahead. It is not my intention to boom this country, or to speak harmful of it. I stand entirely alone, because I tell of the conditions there; as they have never been told before. You will find it intensely interesting. I went to Canada to see it, and I saw it. I was there twenty months, and traveled almost all over it. I drove more than eight hundred miles, to the end of wagon travel, then took ponies to end of pack trail; then took row boat to the end of canoe travel, then took steamer to the ice. Then walked until that was all taken up. Then took dog sleigh, and finished up. I saw all the prairie they have, and all the moskeg, bush country that I wanted to see. Take this book along, and consult it as you go. It will save you from one hundred to one thousand dollars. It will tell you when to go, how to go, where to go, and what you will find when you get there.

To the tourists who would seek the most improved portions, and the grandest scenery. To the sportsman who likes outdoor life, and the shooting of big game. To the farmer who would seek a free home in a new country. To the stock raiser who would like to find a new west. There is room here for all.

Now to the poor man who can't afford to experiment, my friend let me say to you right here, be careful of newspaper reports and magazine articles: read them, and weigh them; they are advertisements and are paid for, and they will say anything when they are paid to say it. And as to any Goverment's literature, I have this to say, their literature might be right, as far as it goes, but they do not go far enough. In so much as they do not change their literature to keep abreast with the rapid changes in a new country. Therefore, such reports are often misleading. If you can get a true and correct report on any country you can tell pretty close as to whether or not you can better your condition there. Where there is advertising there is misrepresentation and fraud. A sure way to judge between advertising matter and true reports is this: where the writer stands alone and tells the bad as well as the good. Then you get a true report, because no man, or set of men are going to pay any man to say a bad word for their country or their goods. I am not interested in any colonization scheme, and no one has paid me a cent to say anything good, or bad for this country—I stand entirely alone. I have resolved in this book to hue to the line, and let the chips fall where they may. Did you ever see anything that was all good and no bad, unless it was an advertisement? (Note)—This book does not carry one advertisement. After traveling over the Canadian Northwest for twenty months, here is a true report of my findings.

I am very truly yours.

JIM M. COOK.

Oh ye, mortal man
Why will ye work for the other man
While Free, Free, Free
Is all of this land to woman or man?

THE CANADIAN NORTHWEST AS IT IS TODAY.

I have seen Canada as it has never been seen before; I have described it as it has never been described before. I am in a class entirely alone. It is a country of mysteries; yet it has many opportunities for a poor man. Farming, truck farming, gardening, mercantile, trading, milling, boating, rafting, and teaming; transportation in every form is in great demand. Stock raising; cattle, horses, sheep, goats, and hogs. Also the trapping of wild furs is very profitable. Fishing is great. Quartz and placer mining is good.

THE START.

For two years before I went to Canada I had been reading magazine articles on Canada until I had the fever pretty bad. I sent to Canada and got Government literature; that gave me the fever worse. I finally decided to go and see for myself what they had up there to brag so much about.

I used our West for the free grass until it was all gone, and my few remaining old poor cows were about to starve. I was born and raised on the great Western cattle ranges of West Texas, and for forty years I have roamed over the West from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border, and from Texas to California. I know all the West, and I think I know a good country when I see it.

On the second day of April, 1910, I left my ranch in New Mexico, and headed for Northwestern Canada. My daughter begged so hard to go with me that I took her along. My object was to find a new West, and I kept going until I found it. We arrived in El Paso, Texas and spent a few days visiting friends, making our arrangements for a twelve months' stay in Canada. On the eleventh of April we bought two tickets—sixty-two dollars each—for Calgary, Canada, and had our baggage checked through to that place. We boarded a west bound Southern Pacific train for Canada. We passed through Deming, New Mexico, Tucson and Fort Yuma, Arizona. We arrived at Los Angeles, California; here we were given our choice of two routes, over the Southern Pacific to San Francisco, the coast route or the inland route. We took the coast route by way of Santa Barbara and San Jose. Part of the route our train ran along almost at the water's edge of the ocean. We were two nights and one day running from El Paso, Texas to Los Angeles, and we were one day and half night running from Los Angeles to San Francisco. At San Francisco we stopped off one day sight seeing, and by arrangement we met my brother, Al W. Cook.

After we had talked a while, he said: "I must go see about my mare, the black-eyed Susie." He then asked where my horse was, and I told him that I had rode the iron horse in there. "Bosh," he said; "you can not find a new West on the railroad; I am going horseback." When we got ready to resume our journey, my brother mounted the black-eyed Susie, and rode to the deck of a great transport vessel lying at the pier. We bid each other good-bye, he to go to the Philippines and Australia, I and my daughter to go to the Canadian Northwest, each of us seeking a new West. We boarded one of the big steam ferry boats at the foot of Market street for Oakland, across the bay. Here we again boarded a Southern Pacific train, north bound. At Portland, Oregon, we stopped a few hours and changed cars to the Northern Pacific. We were out from San Francisco two nights and one day. That afternoon we ran into Seattle, Washington. Here we stopped until next day at 10 a. m., when we resumed our journey north, still with the Northern Pacific. We arrived at Sumas at 4 p. m. same day. Sumas is on the American side of the International boundary line. Here we made a short stop; then our train pulled up a short distance and made another stop, this time just across the line on the Canadian side.

CROSSING THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY LINE.

Now if you have never been in a foreign country you are apt to feel a little restless, as you do not know just what kind of a grilling you are going to be put through. You are not quite sure that you will measure up to the standard of entry. There was evidence that there were people in the car who had never been in a foreign country before, as there was a stillness; not a noise above a whisper. Presently word ran through the car, "Open up your grips, the Customs Officers are coming." We did not make a move to open anything. When the officer came to us with book and pencil in hand, he asked the following questions: Are you an American citizen? What is your name? Your age? Height? Weight? Complexion? Your residence? Your occupation? Have you ever been in Canada before? What is your business over here? Have you any relatives in Canada? How much cash have you on your person? Have you any bonds, notes, or mortgages? He asked my daughter a few questions, and passed on. We had two large grips and a fine rifle, but he did not so much as look toward either of them. He did not ask me to count my cash in his presence, but he did ask a man just in front of me to count his cash. Our train soon pulled on a few miles to Mission Junction. Here we changed cars from the Northern Pacific to the Canadian Pacific. We were now fifty miles east of Vancouver, B. C.

For the benefit of others who might come over this route, let me say, our tickets from El Paso, Texas to Calgary, Canada, cost us sixty-two dollars each. But if we had bought them by way of Los Angeles-San Francisco, then by steamboat to Vancouver, B. C., by way of Seattle, it would have been about fifteen dollars cheaper, each. And that way we should have got to see enough of California to judge what it was like. Then we would have got out of sight of land, at sea on the way up the coast, and got an idea what an ocean voyage would be like—maybe got seasick. Then at Vancouver we would have taken the same train that we took at Mission Junction, Canadian Pacific, east bound.

Now we leave Mission Junction. We soon strike the Frazier river. The country around Mission Junction is mountainous and rough, only fit for lumbering, not much good for that. We now follow up the Frazier river that pours down through the foothills of the Selkirk mountains to the Pacific. There is no valley to this river at all, until we get high up on it. Then there is some good country around Ash Croft. Here we would turn north to Fort George, overland route. But we keep on east to Kamloops, and on across the Selkirk mountains. The country after leaving Kamloops is very rough. There is grand scenery crossing the Selkirks; they are the south end of the Canadian rockies. At the foot of the rockies on the east side they break off abruptly into a rolling prairie. This prairie extends east almost to Winnipeg, south to the International boundary line, and north for a hundred miles. We now follow down the Bow river fifty miles to Calgary in Alberta. I had expected to find at Calgary a small cattle man's town on open range country, but to my surprise I found an up-to-date city with miles of paved streets, electric lighted, tall buildings, street cars, and about

forty-thousand people; all of this prairie described above filed on, fenced up, and much of it under cultivation. A fine country this is, but it is all gone.

Just below Calgary the Canadian Pacific Railroad Co. has taken out of the Bow river a canal that waters several thousand acres of land. There is very little irrigating done in Canada, for there is not much need for it. They seldom ever fail on a good crop of wheat, oats and barley. Now to read Canadian literature and magazine articles one would think that one could go to Canada, get off at most any railroad station, walk out a little way, and select a good homestead claim in a prairie country, move on to it and go to plowing. Now, gentle reader, do not get that idea. Up to 1900 one could have done that, in some places, but you can not do that now. If you would pick all the apples off of one tree, pile them in one pile, sort them every day for a week, taking the best each time, by Saturday you would have a pretty sorry lot of apples, would you not? That is the way you would find prairie land in Canada today south of the Athabaska river. Then there is no prairie land north of that river until you get to the Peace river. By wagon road the Athabaska river is one hundred miles north of Edmonton, and Edmonton is the most northerly point of railroad in Canada. It is three hundred miles northwest from Athabaska landing to Peace river landing. That would make four hundred miles from any railroad before you could get any prairie lands. We are still at Calgary; our baggage is there; we have not seen it yet since we left El Paso, Texas. We have bought our tickets for Edmonton at Calgary, six dollars each; no rates. We step into the baggage room to have our baggage rechecked to Edmonton. The checking clerk takes our tickets and old checks, and rechecks our baggage which consisted of two trunks. Mind you it had not been inspected by the Customs Officials. To guard against any oversight and possible delay I reminded the checking clerk that our baggage was from the States, and had not yet been inspected by the Customs Officials. He remarked, "That is not necessary;" so we passed on.

We leave Calgary at 9 a. m. over the northbound Canadian Pacific for Edmonton; about two hundred miles distant. The first hundred miles is gently rolling prairie, all taken up, under fence, and dotted all over with farm houses. Every fifteen to twenty-five miles we find a new looking small town; more or less new improvements going up. Everything looks new, substantial, and up-to-date. The people are moving around at a two-forty gait. Everything has an air of prosperity.

Now we come to a country that is alternate bush and prairie, and the closer we get to Edmonton the more bush we find. However, the bush as well as the prairie has been taken here. The prairie country we have passed so far seems to be well watered; but the bush country always has more water than the prairie country in the form of lakes, rivers and creeks. We arrive at Strathcona. This is on the south bluff of the Saskachewan river, the end of this branch of the C. P. R. R. Here we are put into a railroad transfer wagon, and the driver was instructed to handle with care, as we were supposed to be some of Uncle Sam's best. What bliss there is in ignorance.

We now cross the river, and on top of the bluff we find the city of Edmonton. It is an up-to-date city in every way; with about forty five thousand people. It is the capital of the Province of Alberta. We are asked by the driver what hotel we wish to go to. Some of us tell him to take us to the Immigration Building. Here we are met by a polite clerk who ushers us into the office. We are here registered with quite a little pomp and ceremony. We are then very politely handed over to a kindly old lady, the Matron, who at once proceeds to show us a place to sleep, a place to cook our meals, a place to eat, a place to wash our clothes, and clean ourselves up, a room to store our baggage in with access to it at all times, wood, water, and light included. Everything was nice and clean. Then we thought of pay day, and I asked the kindly old soul what about pay day. She threw up her hands and said: "There will not be one cent charges for anything for the first seven days." Some of us staggered one way, while others fell the other. We went out and bought what we wanted, brought it here and cooked it the same as though we were in our own home. Here in this town we saw people from every civilized country. Some had land, others were hunting land. I visited the land office. There was a large force of clerks, yet one would have to wait one hour or longer to get attention. There is a market square heer where you can buy all kinds of country and farm produce. The finest sheaf oats I ever saw was selling in this yard, off the farmer's wagon at eight dollars per ton. I stayed about two weeks in Edmonton, and during that time I talked with men on the street, with farmers, and with the men in the auction sales yard, of which there are two adjoining the market square. I got all the information I could in geenral about the country. I ran east from Edmonton two hundred miles, and talked with many prospectors. I ran west on the Grand Trunk Pacific to Medicine Lodge, the end of the completed railroad. Thus from the information I got from the land office I found that there was not any prairie land unoccupied south of the Saskachewan river. I met at the Immigration hall a party of people who had prospected to the east, north, south and west of Edmonton for hundreds of miles and no prairie lands open—all thick bush and timbered land. Then seven of us organized into a traveling and prospectoring party. Then came the question as to what kind of an outfit would be best suited for traveling in the far northwest land. We visited the market square, the auction sales yards, and priced cattle and horses. Some of our party wanted horses, some wanted oxen; I wanted big cows, giving milk. People laughed at the idea of working milk cows to a wogn, to take supplies into that country; but I reasoned with them. Horses were high, and besides they would require feed to keep up and travel. Then the mosquitoes, flies and gnats would be harder on horses than on cattle. Horses were much more apt to get sick than cattle, then the cows would give us milk and butter; oxen would break land all without feed, only the native grasses. Then the cows would raise calves. Then when we got to the muskegs, we had heard the cattle would be much better than the horses. Then we had heard that cattle were scarce in that far northwest land, and that Indian ponies were plentiful, and cheap.

I will here introduce to you our party. His Royal Majesty, The Honorable, Right Reverend Sir Hollingsworth Beaconsfield Crabb. He was direct from the highlands of Scotland, had traveled over all the British possessions, including, he said, Arkansaw. Then there was Big Dutch from Montana in the States; Muttonhead George, who said he was from nowhere, and had not been long from there. However, before we had got to the end of our journey he admitted his identity, and said he was from Rackensack, and would D. D. D soon be rackin back. Then there was a man from Maine, who would give no name, but we must give him a name; so as he was from Maine we will just call him Mac the Maniac. Then there was Miss Nellie Crabb, Miss Winnie Cook, and your humble servant. From time to time during our travels another party would drop in and travel with us a few days, and then drop out as you see we were a rather select party.

BUYING OUR OUTFIT.

Mr. Crabb and myself visited some milk dairies out of town a little way and selected some cows. I bought four big cows all giving milk, and one young bull, good stock, being but three years old. Mr. Crabb bought two black Holstein cows giving milk. Big Dutch bought two big oxen. He and Mr. Crabb bought the regulation horse harness, with bridles and bits in their mouths, and check lines. I wanted the old-fashioned Texas ox-yoke, and as I could not find them in the market I had to make them. We now bought some tents and camp stoves, and established a camp two miles out of town, tied our stock up, fed hay, and proceeded to get our outfit ready for the final dash. We bought three wagons. I made an old-fashioned cattleman's mess box in the back end of the wagon; it filled up the back end of the wagon, and had a lid on, hinges that dropped down when in camp. That served as a table. I had my cooking tools, and about one week's supplies in the mess box, saving so much climbing in and out of the wagon. I had a two-gallon milk can that I filled with pure cream, and when traveling I put this in my mess box; the shaking over the trail would churn it, and when I made camp I had only to take up the butter, as fine as you ever popped your lips over. When we went into camp we drew straws to see who would do the cooking. The girls stacked the cards on us, and it fell to my lot to do the cooking. I printed on a cardboard the following, and hung it up on the mess box: "The Bill of Fare, and the First One Who Complains About the Pie Will Have to Do the Cooking," and much to my sorrow there was never a whimper. As we expected to be out a year on this trip, we loaded on all the supplies we could pull. I put on thirty- hundred pounds of provisions. We had laid in a good supply of warm clothes, tobacco and pipes, a medicine chest with such medicines as we knew how to use, including a supply of homesick powders, fishing tackle, steel traps, guns and ammunition, a boat made of canvas that two men could pack in making a portage, small camp stoves to sit on the

ground, put one joint of pipe on for baking, frying and stewing.

Everything in readiness, Big Dutch hooked up his oxen and took the lead. Mr. Crabb hooked up his two cows. I hooked up three cows and the bull; tied their tails together so they could not turn the wrong end foremost. However, we had drilled our stock some before making a start on the trail. I had appointed myself as chief driver, Muttonhead George and Maniac Mac as my first, and second assistant drivers. Once we were ready to go, I placed George on the ground, Mac on the other side, each with a rope on the leaders. I mounted the wagon with a rope on each of the wheelers, then gave the word, "Go!" and dropped my blacksnake on the bull a little too hard. He made a lunge and started the wagon. The off-wheeler set back, the leaders both made a lunge at the same time, left the trail, and started in the direction of the milk dairy where I had bought them at a two-forty gait. My assistants began to pull them down. I shouted, "Circle to the right and let them go." The assistants thought I said "Whoa!" and they sat down on the ropes and stopped them. I then drilled the drivers a little. I told them to circle them back to the trail, and if they ran to let them run as long as they wanted to. We made another start and this time everything worked admirably. We got back on the trail and they ran for a mile. We then slowed them down to ten miles an hour, and finally got them down to a reasonable gait.

By this time everything had it's tongue out, including my assistants. My daughter was walking, and leading her pet cow. We stopped to rest, and to see what had become of our friends. We saw them a mile back coming nicely. Mr. Crabb had tied his team to Big Dutch's wagon behind. He and his daughter were walking; one on each side, with a rope on each cow. When we went into camp that afternoon we had everything cooled down, and they were doing nicely. This was the sixth day of May, 1910. We were having lovely sunshiny weather. The first twenty miles out we had fine roads. The country was half prairie and half bush, considerable farming. At the Sturgeon river it rained on us and we laid up one day; this was twenty miles out.

Let us figure some on the cost of a prospector's outfit at Edmonton. Horses are ready sale at Edmonton, and high; all the people are wise to it, and if anyone in the vicinity of the city has anything they want to sell quick, they take it to the auctioneers. So it would not pay you to lose any time in trying to buy any thing on the side. The cheapest way in the long run is, if you want to buy a horse or a pair of horses, go to the sales yards and get them. They have three sales each week. The reason why I went to a dairy to buy my cows is because the cows on sale were not fat, and I must have fat stock to start on such a trip. I paid thirty-five to forty-five dollars a head for my cows, and I paid eighty dollars for the young bull. I paid forty-five dollars for my wagon at the sales yards. Big Dutch bought his at a store and paid ninety. Mr. Crabb paid forty for his on sale, twenty-five for the harness at sale. Big Dutch paid forty-five for his harness. Mr. Crabb paid sixty-five for two cows at a dairy. Big Dutch paid $210 for two big oxen on sale. I told him they were too heavy on their feet for a big load so far. He thought

not, so when we got three hundred miles out one ox was completely played out, so that he had to leave him on the trail. He then bought two cows, and two horses. He hooked the two cows on the tongue; the two horses in the lead, led one ox and left the other one. He had his oxen shod when we started; I told him not to do that; I told him that their feet would get tender, then when their shoes wore out he could get no more, and that then his big heavy oxen would play out; and I was exactly right. It happened just as I had told him it would. My cows, being light on their feet walked along with my load, chewing their cuds, still giving more milk than we could use. The cheapest horse that I saw sell was for ninety dollars; he was fourteen hands high, old, and thin in flesh. I saw a pair of ponies sell for $225. The best horses I saw sold were for $600 per pair. Cows and stock cattle were the cheapest stock I saw in Edmonton. They told me that my cows would get footsore, go dry, and die; that they would not pull a load. I told them they did not know much about cows. I have driven cows from Texas to Montana; they suckled big calves all the way, and were fat when I got through. Provisions are as cheap in Edmonton as they are in any of the western States. Good flour was $2.55 per hundred, and everything else in proportion. Of course after the outfitting season is over horses are some cheaper, as people don't want to winter them. As in all farming countries, good pasturage is scarce. While in the Peace river ranges the horses requir no feed at all; they ram over the entire district. From April first to August first Edmonton is swarming with people hunting land. They are outfitting in all kinds of ways, and going into the country in every direction. Many of them file on bush land rather than go so far from the railroad.

After I arrived in Edmonton, and while gathering all the information I could before starting out, I heard of three books that had been written by individuals on Canada. I looked them up and bought a copy of each and read them. I found one of the parties in town who wrote one of these books. It contained only four pages, and the title was "Seventeen Questions Answered." I looked this man up, and he interested me in a way. I soon saw that the information he was willing to impart to me was worth nothing, but it was interesting to know what his business was, how he conducted it. It was in this way. He had set himself up as a private land guide. He told me that his business was to pilot people into the Peace river country. He would have a man sign up with him, and the man would place twenty-five dollars in a bank in Edmonton, with the understanding that he, the private land guide, was to ride along in front of a bunch of men and show them the trail to Peace River Landing. When they got to that place, he turned back, and the money was his. He told me that he expected to have one hundred men in his party. He was out nothing on the way out to Peace river, as this party was to board and bed him. His information of the route was all the capital he had invested. That shows how difficult the people thaught it was to find the route into that northwest country, to say nothing of the cost otherwise of getting in there. He admitted that there was only one route into that coun-

try, that a wagon could get through on. This ought to give you some idea of the magnitude attached to the getting into that country with the outfit I had. This man passed my camp on the trail one hundred and fifty miles out, but I was out hunting and I did not see how many he had, but he had a large party, all horse teams.

Another one of thees books mentioned above was half advertisements, and of little importance to me. The third one was written by a wealthy lady who had some time before gone out to the head of Lesser Slave Lake on a steamer, and talked with the French Canadian monks, then went back to New York, and wrote the book. It treated more on saving the souls of the venturesome traveler that went into that northwest land, and as it treated more on caring for the soul than taking care of the stomach, I paid little attention to it.

The rain is over. We will now hook up our cows and pull on. We cross the Sturgeon river, and climb a long hill out of the river valley. On top we pass into a dense forest. The trees are so thick and tall that they overlap the trail, and we are in the shade most of the time. Our cows are awkward, but we have no serious trouble. We make a road ranch every night on this part of the trail, where we get feed for our stock. We are traveling very slow, getting our stock broken in. Nothing of interest occurred, and this forest extended on to within twelve miles of the Athabaska river. Here we came to a beautiful little river with a pretty valley, and some farms. We camped over night here. The next afternoon we came to the bluff over the Athabaska river. We locked two wheels of our wagons, then rough-locked one wheel, and slid down a long hill and camped in the edge of a village, in the valley of this mighty river, over night.

We had no sooner got ourselves comfortably fixed in camp, when we were visited by a French Canadian monk. He made many inquiries of us as to where we were from, where we wer going, what we intended to do, and many questions of a religious nature. He finally wound up by saying that his church hoped that in the near future to be able to take care of the souls of the people who were going into that far northwest land. We laid over here the next day and visited around the village and the ship yards, where a large force of men were at work building boats to carry freight up and down the river—mostly down the river. All the freight going into the north and northwest territories is hauled on wagons in summer from Edmonton, then sent up the rivre to northwestern points, on steamers, and it is sent down the river in York boats, into Lake Athabaska, across that lake, and down the Great Slave river to Great Slave lake. Then it is put on steamers, and sent out to all the Hudson Bay Company's fur trading posts all around the lake. Then on into the Mackenzie river, and down that river to the Arctic ocean, supplying all the trading posts along that river. The distance from Athabaska landing to the mouth of the Mackenzie river, where it empties into the Arctic ocean, or Mackenzie bay, is two thousand miles. This freight is carried in York boats and steamers.

Canada is about one-third larger than the United States. The Unlted States has a population of ninety million. Canada has a

population of only ten million people. To give you some idea of the vastness of this far northwest land, and how sparsely settled it is, nine-tenths of the population of Canada is within the following territory: Take a Canadian map, draw a straight line from Prince Rupert on the Pacific Coast to Quebec on the St .Lawrence, and nine-tenths of the population is south of that line, and one-tenth is north of it. A York boat is about fifty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and six feet deep; they are managed with oars and long poles in going down stream. There are about fifty of these boats sent down the Atabaska river each year to take in supplies, and out of that number only about five ever return. They only bring enough of them back to bring out what furs they pick up at the Hudson Bay Company's posts.

The Hudson Bay Company was established in 1670. This Company was organized for the purpose only of carrying on a fur trade with the Indians in north and northwest Canada. In the early days it slipped up on the blind side of the king of England, and obtained a title to about two-thirds of Canada, not including British Columbia, but in later years England got most of this land back. Up to recent years this company had a monopoly on the fur trade of Canada. They now have a competitor in Revillion Bros. For two hundred years the Hudson Bay were dictators in that vast domain. They oppressed the natives who were Indians and French Canadians, and became vastly rich. In 1670 they established trading posts around Hudson Bay, and gradually pushed out until they had trading posts scattered all over the northern parts of Canada. They are still there buying furs. Canada is a great fur country and always will be.

At Athabaska Landing we talk with the native Indians, prospectors and the Canadian Royal Northwest Mounted Police. We have arrived at the conclusion that this is about the end of the trail; that on account of all freight traffic on the trail stopping at this point, there is scarcely any trail beyond this, only a blazed route. That didn't sound very good to us, as we had had pretty smooth sailing so far as compared to later on. There is lying at the pier here now a steamboat, the "Midnight Sun." It plies up and down the Athabaska river. It runs up this river to the mouth of the Lesser Slave river. There they make a portage of sixteen miles up that river to the head of the rapids. There they reload back on to another steamboat called "The Northern Light," which plies up that river, passing out into Lesser Slave Lake, thence up the lake one hundred miles to head of steamboat navigation. As this point lays on our route we ship most of our stuff by this boat to head of the lake.

We here begin to realize more fully the magnitude of our undertaking. From here on we strike settlements at intervals of about one hundred miles. We can get no more feed for our stock, only the native grasses. We make hobbles, and get a bell for each animal, and get a chemical preparation to put on stock to keep off mosquitoes, flies and gnats, which the natives tell us will eat us up alive when we cross the river and get into the big swamps. I asked if it was really as bad as that, and one man told us that he was making a trip through that country with oxen, and his oxen got away, and while out

hunting them he came upon a fresh carcass of an ox. He heard a noise overhead, and in looking up he saw a mosquito sitting in a tree. The mosquito had eaten his ox, and was sitting in this tree picking his teeth with an ox horn. Another man told us they used tents for jails in that country in summer. He said to arrest a man, take off all his clothes, put him in a tent, that he would never dare come out for fear the mosquitoes would get him. By this time I noticed that my assistant drivers were getting extremely nervous, and their eyes looked like two fried eggs in a mud hole. I thought best not to make any further interrogation.

LEAVING ATHABASKA LANDING.

Our arrangements now being complete, we drove one team at a time on to the ferryboat and crossed the river. Here we had to double teams to get up the hill. The first few miles out was an open timbered country, being very high bluff over the river. Here we found quite a settlement, all Americans. The remark was made that it was going to rain. I observed that there was a clear sky. I then understood the joke as this settlement were all Ameri an Negroes, representing a dark cloud. Five miles out we got our first introduction to a gnuine muskeg. Moskeg is composed of a general mixture of decayed vegetation of every description, rotted logs, mixed with earth, and thoroughly wet. It is always found in the dark dismal swamps, of which a great part of the whole of Northern Canada is composed. Here we go into camp, and make some investigations. We now find that cattle have a great advantage over horses, in getting through the moskeg. We have music here in the tone of wild geese, ducks, and many other wild game birds, mingled with which is the coarse croaking of bullfrogs and smaller type. Here is where our Texas high top boots come in good play. Mr. Crabb and I had put our daughters in such boots before leaving Edmonton. This moskeg is in streaks of thirty feet to one mile wide. I take the lead as usual. Myself and assistants are wading, as our cows are not very well used to such a trail. A mile of this and we come to a corduroy. This is poles laid on the ground, close together, to serve as a bridge. We have this at intervals of a few hundred yards to two miles, until we arrive at Lesser Slave Lake.

The intervening country is slightly elevated ground, and gently rolling ridges. Unless I mention prairie, gentle reader, you may know we see none. Then the country is all about the same as above described. Water every few miles, and we are fortunate in finding the very finest of wild grasses everywhere. In two or three hours our stock are all full, and lay down to rest. I will tell you when we meet the flies, and mosquitoes. At intervals of three to five miles we find small openings around some small lake, or along some little branch or creek, large enough to make camp. Always the finest of grasses, and in many places wild pea vine. The first day in the moskeg we camp in a small opening in the timber where the forest fires had passed over in years gone by and killed the timber. We cross a creek and camp, tie a rope across the bridge to keep our stock from crossing back during the night. We now hobble everything at night. Plenty of fine wood at hand at every camp ground.

I have one extra cow. She is an extra fine milker, and is the girl's pet. Now when we struck the moskeg, my daughter was afraid to

ride on the wagon, so it was walk or ride her pet cow. I put a roll of bedding wrapped in a tarpaulin Texas cowboy style, on this pet cow, caught the girl by the foot, and put her on the cow. I tied a loop in a rope, threw it across the pack for stirrups; fixed a bridle of a rope, gave the girl a long switch, and told her to keep up with the wagon. After the cow had pitched around some, turned over a few dead logs, rode down a few saplings, she hit the trail for the other cattle, bawling like a wild yearling, and the girl sticking to the pack like a leech. When we saw this I suggested that there must be a grass bur under the pack. Muttonhead George grunted and said, "Grass bur nothing; the cow is not accustomed to that." This cow packed a fifty pound roll of bedding every day. She followed the wagon just as a calf would. Every time we came to a moskeg, or creek, or when the girl wanted to ride; she jumped on and off and rode as long as she wanted to. At noon the pack was taken off so the cow could lay down. This was a fine milk cow; she never failed in her milk for an eight hundred mile drive. I paid forty-five dollars for her, and sold her for $110.

Every day is about the same on this part of the trail until we reach Lesser Slave Lake. The order of the day was. Rise about sun-up, milk the cows, have breakfast, hook up and drive until about eleven o'clock, then turn everything wild loose, with a bell on every thing, as the bush is so dense that if one animal laid down one might hunt for an hour unless you heard the bell tap. Then about two p. m. hook up and drive until the sun was about an hour high; sometimes earlies, sometimes later; according to grass and water. After we had crossed the Athabaska river, and struck out into that wild and unhabitated country, the timber in many places was so tall and thick that it made the trail resemble a tunnel through a hill more than a wagon road. In many places for miles and miles the timber was so thick that two wagons could not pass each other without chopping trees or brush. This we had to do a few times when we feared to meet some returning traveler. One poor fellow wrote back to his mother in the States that he would come back home as soon as he could find room to turn his wagon around.

We came to a horsehead stuck up on a pole by the roadside, with this inscription on it: "Cheer up! Only one thousand miles of this, then we strike God's country." Another time we observed close by the roadside a mound of earth, thrown up resembling a grave. There was a stick driven in the ground at one end of it, and a board nailed on it. On the board was this inscription: "Here lies the remains of John Jones: he died on the tenth day of May, 1910. His death was caused by Peace river fever." Further on up the trail we came to another mound of earth resembling the other one. On a piece of box tacked on a slab, was this inscription: "I am Bill Smith, the last of the Jones' party. According to my feelings now I will not be able to bury myself; so when you find me will you kindly sink me in the moskeg." And on another board below this one was this inscription: "I have caused to be put out of sight Bill Smith, according to his last wishes. After a careful diagnosis by me I find that he died of a relapse of Peace river fever, Signed, J. Ramboozle, Veterinary." We found others of a similar

character during our travels. I mention these incidents to show you that others have at least attempted the passage of this trail. This is also the trail over which some of the Klondikers passed. We saw evidences of them in the way of old broken-down carts and equipage, and carcasses of dead horses.

I am sorry to have to report here a very sad occurrence. I had noticed for several days that my first assistant driver was on the wane as he was no longer the life of our little party, and to lose him would be a great calamity. Muttonhead George could see an Indian further around the hill than any of us; he could shoot closer to a bear to miss him than any of us. Many feats he could perform that the average man would marvel at. He was a valuable asset, and we tried to revive his waning spirit, and had partly succeeded when we came upon this first grave. After that he relapsed, and we were having poor luck with him when unfortunately we came upon the second grave. We were all standing around the grave when I noticed that George had taken off his hat. Presently he moved slowly off to camp, as we had camped not far away. Here he admitted his identity. He talked to us of his dear old home in Arkansaw: of the dear ones he had left behind. When he first went to Texas then they had given him up for lost. Oh, if he was only now back in Texas, he would be satisfied, as goodness knows that was wild enough. That night he completely went under, and refused to be comforted. My homesick powders proved too weak in his case. A few days later he took a steamer down the Athabaska, and turned his face toward dear old Arkansaw, and vowed that he would never roam again. He bid us a sad farewell, and made a run for a steamer cabin.

We are slowly creeping along over the trail with some better success than Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith had. We are traveling up Lesser Slave river. We arrive at the head of the rapids: portage: This place is known as Norris Landing. Here we camp over night. We hook up the next morning, and hit the trail. We got a short distance when one of Big Dutch's oxen gets very sick. He laid down in the trail with the harness on. I got into my medicine chest, got out a bottle of chloroform, put a teaspoonful in a pint bottle of water, drenched him in the nose. He had eaten a poison weed. We waited on him a few hours, then pulled on a short distance, and went into camp. We fished and hunted that afternoon and killed a moose. The next morning the ox was all right. We pass on until we come to within eight miles of the foot of Lesser Slave Lake. Here we come to Moskeg creek by name. I drive into it and stick. We hook on all four teams and pull one wagon at a time across, then camp for noon. Here a band of Indians pass us: they are moving. The men weer riding the ponies, the squaws and children were walking. They had quite a bunch of dogs with them. They are a shaggy looking lot, as they are the dogs used by them to pull their sleighs in winter; bu they now have them packed! Every dog has a pack tied on his back; as much as he can stand under. We watch them cross the creek. They make no halt, but the whole cavalcade plunges into the mud and water. The squaws are driving the dogs all the time, the children bringing up the rear. Every dog was wearing a sleigh bell which added music to the scene. We here come on to

a lovely little valley which extends on to the foot of the lake. This prairie is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass standing twelve to eighteen inches high and waving like a wheat field.

We arrive at the foot of Lesser Slave Lake. Here we find a Hudsons Bay trading post, a police station, an Indian village, and some French Canadian trappers. The sight of so much water at one view is new to us. We go into camp on a velvet strip of grass bordering the lake. Here we see some barefooted Indian squaws fishing. They have nets set far out in the lake. They get in Indian canoes and attend them. We buy some fish from them more to please them, as we are not fish hungry, for we have had all the fish and game we wanted all the time, since crossing the Athabaska river; we have killed three moose,, two deer, geese, ducks, and prairie chickens.

The first four miles here is fine. We have a lovely sandy beach, now we strike stone from the size of a marble to that of a barrel. To describe the roadbed properly, say you have a bed of loose stone 100 feet deep, one hundred feet wide, of the sizes above mentioned; drive on to this bed of stone and try to travel. The stone would slip, or roll under the stocks feet. They were unable to keep their footing. Often a stone would get under a wheel, that would cause the wheel to slide instead of turn. We made only two miles of this the first half day. This bed of stone extended from the dense timber on one side to the water in the lake on the other. A distance of from three hundred feet to half a mile. We could not get into the timber, and it would not be best to get into the lake so we had to make the best we could of the stone. The first night we camped on the stone, no feed. We tied our stock up and lay down on the stone to rest. At three a. m. we hooked up and drifted on for two miles or more, and came to a small grassy flat. Here we camped and had breakfast and dinner. We had only gone one-fourth mile out of this camp until we dropped into a deep sand bed. Here we worked hard and made about three miles. We came to a slough, and made camp for night; good feed here. Leaving this camp we had a slough for a few miles—not boggy, yet water and mud caused from the melted snow in the timber above, and seeping through the earth to the lake. A few miles of this and then stone again; then deep sand. When on the stone we could scarcely see any sign of where other wagons had passed. The same way with the sand. From the foot of the lake to its head we had this kind of trail. Only this narrow passage between the dense forest on one side, and the lake on the othr. Eight to ten miles we came to a muskeg creek emptying into the lake. They are always mean to cross. We passed several Indian camps on the shores of this lake, who were catching fish and drying them for winter food. There were many varieties of fish in the lake, but the Indians seemed to save only the white fish, which were very fine. The sizes they saved weighed from six to twelve pounds. They used nets altogether in catching these fish. They way we got our fish, we would wade into the lake in places where there was tall grass, and shoot them with a rifle, they being very tame and easy to kill. If we wanted fish for dinner we had half a dozen in camp in a few minutes. Ducks were always plentiful, and some geese on the lake. We only saw two rabbits while in Canada. Peo-

ple there told us that the rabbits only came around once every seven years, and unfortunately for habbit hunting this is leap year. They say that during every seven years rabbits come in, in great numbers, then they have a disease that kills them all off. We left Edmonton May sixth, and arrived at the foot of Lesser Slave Lake June fifth, covering two hundred and twenty-five miles.

Gentle reader, I told you before that I would let you know when we met the mosquitoes—they have now presented their bills The middle of the day is now very warm. Up to now we have had lovely weather; camp fires felt good nights and mornings. We could enjoy a fire yet in the early morning, but the order of travel now is to rise at three a. m., drive until nine; camp, and have breakfast and dinner in same camp. At two p. m. hook up, drive until five, then camp for the night. The mosquitoes meet us about six a. m., and by nine they quit us. Then a large black fly takes care of us through the middle of the day. A large yellow gnat also works in the middle of the day. About five p. m. they turn in, and the mosquito comes back and stays until about nine p. m.. Then we are not molested until six a. m. This is the rule now, but as the weather gets warmer they change their schedule; they then work earlier and later. We wear mosquito netting over our heads and down to our shoulders; and gloves. The first thing we do when we go into camp in the evening is to set fire to some rotten logs to drive the mosquitoes away. If they are very bad the stock will graze a little while, then come and stand close in the smoke until they got rid of them. After they have finished grazing for the night, they come up and lay near camp; we do not hobble anything now; just turn everything footloose, day or night.

After fifteen days of hard struggle in coming around Slave Lake we arrive at Shaw's Point Landing. This is the head of steamboat navigation on the lake; but the lake extends on some twenty miles further. Here we find our freight that we shipped from Athabaska Landing. We load it on our wagons and pull on to the extreme end of the lake. Here we go into camp, for one week, as we are all about played out, and our stock needs rest. From Shaw's Point steamboat landing to this camp there is a fringe of prairie all the way up, bordering the lake. Near here is the little cosmopolitan village; it is more evenly divided with a conglomerated mixture of nationalities than any village I ever saw. It contains three hundred souls, exclusive of Indians, of which there is quite a village, mostly halfbreeds. The name of the village is Grouard. Here is a Hudson Bay and Revillion Brothers' trading posts; an independent store, a hotel, meat market, blacksmith shop, postoffice, a saloon and dancehall. There is a large Catholic Mission here preesided over by old-fashioned French Canadian monks. This mission was established here many years ago, and it has bled the natives until it is rich. They have good buildings, a saw mill, a farm, and about three hundred head of cattle. There is also an English church Mission here, competitors of the Catholic. They are not so rich as the poor Indian has been bled so long that his blood is getting quite thin. This has been headquarters for the fur traders for a long time., draining all the country to the north and northwest of it to the International boundary line of Canada and Alaska. This is also a branch head-

quarters for the Canadian Royal Northwest Mounted Police. There is also a court here, composed of three Justices of the Peace. This Royal Court is vested with the same powers as that of a District Court in the United States, it having the power to dispose of the body only. Then the Catholic and English Church Missions step in and wrangle over what disposition shall be made of the poor trembling soul. The right of the disposition of the soul, settled, carries with it the rights to the chattels and goods left behind. Gentle reader, this paragraph is only hearsay, as I have not yet passed through that ordeal.

While we are here in this camp let us take stock. This point is considered half-way ground between Edmonton and the center of attraction in the Peace river country. Mr. Crabb and myself have used good dairy cows, all giving milk in making this trip, and after one week's rest here on fine native grasses, and no other feed since crossing the Athabaska river. Our cows today look almost as good as they did the day we started; and they have failed very little in their milk. Big Dutch had big heavy oxen, and shod to start with. Our cows all barefooted. Dutch managed by a scratch to get into camp after us pulling him more than he pulled us. His oxen are so completely played out that he is compelled to leave one here. Here he bought two small horses, paying three hundred dollars. He bought two small cows, unbroke, paying for the two ninety dollars. He bought one set of second hand harness paying forty dollars. For one set of stretchers for lead team, he paid nine dollars. He hooked the cows on the tongue, the horses in the lead, and had no trouble after that. Then as we came around Slave Lake a man passed us. He had two fine large young mares and light load. At this point these mares were unable to pull his wagon any further, and he bought a pair of horses, paying a handsome price. The people at this point are wise to this state of affairs, and they lay for just such chances to rob the weary traveler. The blacksmith comes in for his share he told one of our party that his blacksmith coal cost him, laid down at the shop here, one hundred and twenty-five dollars per ton. Five dollars for shoeing one two-bit horse. For all other work in proportion.

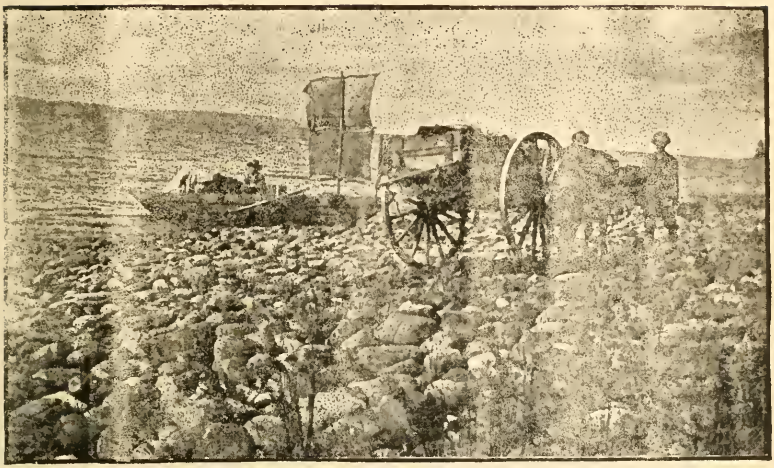
While in this camp we attended an annual feasting, and war dance by the Indians. Prior to this gathering invitations had been sent out for hundreds of miles to all Indians to participate in this grand rally of the Red man. These Indians are called the Cree Indians. On the little prairie near our camp the feasting ground was selected. For several days the Indians had been gathering in, stretching their teepees, until it had the appearance of an old time Indian stronghold on our own western borders. However, it did not have the fascination for me as it did for some, as it brought home to me the memories of scenes in my boyhood days. Many of which were made sad to me, by the Red man. As I was once captured by the Comanchies, when a small boy and carried far into their fastnesses, and held a prisoner for several months. On the opening day there was a grand parade by all; speaking by the big Chiefs, and medicine men. Then feasting, then horse racing, then feasting and war dancing, until a late hour at night. The second

day opened as the first, and about the same routine, all day and until a late hour at night. The third day opened as the first and second, only there was an absence of warriors, who had mistaken firewater for coffee. Then their old ponies presented a more or less sad appearance on account of over indulgence. The Chief having taken in the situation, had issued orders cutting time from two-forty to five minutes. Palefaces were much in evidence. Toward the close of the third day everything began to wane, but the Indians, and merry making kept up until a late hour at night. The fourth day opened with farewell speechmaking; then came the general parting of friends, the striking of tents and the scattering of seven hundred Indians. Dust was rising from trails in every direction by departing Indians for their wigwams, some of them taking canoes and crossing the lake.

We receive a visit from the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. The officer takes out a book and pencil, and proceeds to question each individual as follows. Your name, where from, age, where are you going, what nationality, are you going to be come a citizen of Canada? where did you buy your wagon, your cows, oxen or horses? the brands on each animal. One object in this is to apprehend fugitives, another is to assist in finding your stock if stolen from you. This is a good thing. They also warned us to be very careful to water out all campfires before leaving them. These officers are very polite, and will give you any information they can.

There is a small prairie about twenty miles west of this point. Back of this little fringe of prairie, around this end of the lake, the timber sets in the same as that we have passed through, except that the country is higher, more rolling, and better drained. The moskegs are not so frequent. Then as all the freight for the Peace river country is hauled in wagons, from the head of the lake, one hundred miles to the Peace river landing, the trail has been chopped out, and worked so that when it is not raining the trail is fairly good to Peace River Landing. Here all freight is again put on the steamer (Peace river), and shipped up the river as far as Fort St. John, three hundred miles. Then form Peace river Landing down the river to Fort Vermilion about the same distance. This steamer can not go any further up, or down the river on account of rapids. Navigation opens on the Peace April 20th and closes October first. About October 1, 1910, the Canadian Government will complete a telegraph line from Edmonton to Peace river landing.

We are now ready to break camp, and start for the far-famed Peace river, one hundred miles north. We are now heavily loaded as we have gotten all our supplies on board; but there being no rock or sand on the trail we move right along. In case that it should be said that we got lost, and did not find the best route from Edmonton to Peace river landing, to that I will say, that the Government telegraph line had followed, and is still following, exactly the trail we followed, all the way from Edmonton to Peace river landing, except in passing Slave Lake, we take the north side as there is not so much moskeg. Then there are no dangerous rivers to cross, whereas on the south side the route of the telegraph line, we would have three dangerous rivers to cross which would necessi-



CART ON STONY TRAIL DESCRIBED ELSEWHERE.

tate the building of three different rafts; or in other words, a raft at each river, and perhaps the cutting down of six river bluffs; hence our choosing the north side. The first day out we make a little prairie called Pea Vine prairie. This prairie contains about one and a half sections of land. Here we find very fine feed. The pea vine is extra fine. Next we come to the Little Heart river. Here there is a small opening, about one section. Next we come to what is called Cabin prairie. This prairie contains one-half section of land. These are what they call prairies in this country. Next we come to what is called Little prairie. This is in extent about ten miles long, and varies from the width of the trail to one mile wide. We are within twenty miles of the Peace, there being no difference in the looks of the country. We seldom travel up or down a creek or river, but seem to follow the highest ridges, whereas to get on the lower ground one would get all seepage from the higher ground. We have not seen one mountain so far; much of the country is so level that the snow water never gets off of the face of the country from winter to winter. That is the cause of so much muskeg and swamp land. The timber is always so dense that we cannot see far enough in any direction to tell what the country looks like at a distance. To sum it up more correctly, we can only see the country at our feet as we pass over it. A man passes us here, and tells us that we are within seven miles of the river. We can't believe it, as the whole country seems to be so level. We have not seen a creek or draw for twenty miles, the timber and underbrush, if you will permit me to say, is so thick that we could not stick a butcher knife through it. And so tall are the trees that we can't see the sun until eleven a. m. It is now raining. This man tells us that it would be very dangerous for us to try to go down the river bluff if the trail is wet, as our wagons might slip off of the trail. If so we would be goners. "Because," said he, " it is a mile from top to bottom of the bluff." We drive on and on, no signs of a river, or even so much as a creek. Presently we see an opening in the timber ahead. Then we come upon the bluff over this mighty Peace river. It has quit raining now, and the sun is shining. We make a slight turn, and come in full view of the river looking west. The sun is shining on it and we stop to look long at this beautiful sight. Standing here and looking up the river, the country seemed to get higher and higher, as though the last view up the river was the top of the mountain, far in the distance. Then comes this river, winding down through the green hills, with the sun shining on it, made it resemble a great shining silver cord. We can not see far down the river, as it makes a short turn to the north, which direction it keeps for three hundred miles. From the top of the bluff where we now stand, to the top of the bluff on the opposite side of the river, appears to be five or six miles. This depression, or canon that the river passes through is covered with timber, from the top of the bluff, to the water's edge on each side. At this point there is no valley to the river. We now travel about two miles along this bluff, and to where the trail begins the descent of the river bluff. Here we find water and grass, and an opening in the timber; and go into camp for the night.

While we are in this camp let me say a little more about the country from Edmonton here. As I feel that too much can not be said about the country. After you have read my description of the country, then construe this meaning according to your own ideas. For an illustration, I will say, if this part of the country could be transformed from the almost densely wooded country to a prairie country, so that we could see it, then in my opinion we would call a great portion of it a high rolling prairie with occasional high hills, but no mountains. And a portion of it would be a flat marshy prairie country, resembling that of the south of Texas laying along the Gulf of Mexico. This trail that we have traveled was evidently first laid out by the early trappers and hunters. Probably piloted by the native Indians, and as this trail seems to follow the highest ground possible, is evidence that they laid great stress on marshy, moskeggy country. Should they follow up or down the streams, as it is a great custom in the States, especially as we did in early days, then where so much snow falls on this level country that has no drain, it simply melts and stands on the ground from winter to winter, causing the earth to be cold and wet. This cold, wet land would not produce stuff if it was cleared of the timber. I believe that most of this timbered land is fine land, and much of the wet land if it could be drained. Occasionally the trail runs along on top of some high bluff over a creek. Here we can get a view of the country for perhaps several miles, but we see no openings in the timber, no prairies, no valley along the creek. There seems to be dense timber from bluff to bluff, on and on across the country as far as we can see, and only in a few places is the timber large enough to be of merchantable value. From fine underbrush to trees a foot through at stump, this timber is so thick that it grows very tall. It is common to see this timber a hundred feet tall, and not a limb on it for eighty feet up. Some of it has only an armfull of brush on its top. There are several kinds of timber in Canada, but the great majority of it is called, poplar, white poplar or aspen. This is the tall tree that is so common everywhere. Then there is a great deal of pine, many varieties. The merchantable timber is found along the largest rivers and lakes. This poplar or aspen has no tap root, but the roots grow so close to the surface that as soon as they get any size the wind blows them over. I have seen this timber laying so thick on the ground that it is next to impossible for a domestic animal to travel across country at all. If you should lose a horse, or cow in this country, they would not attempt to go far through the woods. They would have to come out on the trail to travel. I have seen in this moskeg country a growth of moss two feet thick. In walking over this country you would set your foot on this moss. It would mash down a foot, then you would have to raise the other foot to get it on top of the moss for the next step; then the next step the same and so on. I can not say how extensive this kind of country is as I only investigated a few steps of it. I have seen laying in some parts of this country old dead logs that were three feet through, and there was not a live tree standing closer than a mile of them. That shows that at one time there was large timber where now there is only brush; and it is my opinion that

had there never been a forest fire in this country timber would be very large here, as the land is fine and there is plenty of moisture. There would be only one thing against it, and that would be the cold; however, I have seen very large trees far above the Arctic circle in Canada. Our trail was generally so crooked that we could scarcely ever see more than a quarter of a mile ahead. Many turns in the trail were so short that I could not make it with two pair of cows, and have them all pull at the same time, and as in many of these places the condition of the trail was such that it required every animal to pull. So in order to have room to swing the leaders to make these turns, I had to chop timber.

Before we left Edmonton Big Dutch thought to kill two birds with one stone. He would need a hayframe, so he buys the lower part of a hay frame. with solid floor, sets it on his wagon, gets some large size bows to extend from outside of frame to outside, buys a tent to fit over these bows, the walls of the tent extending to the ground on each side, and when in camp he would drop the walls down, and sleep under the wagon. Now, before we had got to Athabaska Landing over the best freight road in Canada north of Edmonton, these bows were all broken off of his wagon, and the tent was so badly torn that he threw it away to save weight. The second day out from Athabaska Landing it became necessary for him to saw this frame to the width of the standards on his wagon. In places two trees would stand so cloes together that a notch was cut in each tree to admit the passage of the wagon hubs between them. Mr. Crabb and I started out with the regulation wagon bows on our wagons, but they soon parted company with us. We then cut some willow poles, and when it rained we bent the poles over our wagons for bows, taking them down after the rain. Many times when I would get stuck and if a cow would break a yoke bow I would step out to the bush, cut a willow pole, bend it in the yoke, wrap a piece of moose hide around it to keep it from slipping through the yoke; all done in a few minutes, and was again shouting, "Lie low bullies."

A few times we came to a deep, narrow gulch that was so narrow, and deep with a bog hole at the bottog, that it was necessary to hook on four pair of cattle. In this case when the wagon would be on one bank the lead team would be on the opposite bank. When pulling in this shape the swing chain would be six or seven feet from the ground, then the middle team would have to walk on their hind feet with their front feet several feet in the air until they could get to the level again. Fortunately for the weary traveler this territory lays just over, and beyond the humane range. Another serious difficulty that hampered us in those tight places, was that my assistant drivers were not familiar with the bull whackers vocabulary

Let us return now to my camp on the bluff overlooking the Peace. On the morning of the fourth of July we lock, and rough lock both hind wheels of our wagons, and begin to descend the bluff which is still wet from the rain the day before. With careful management we have no trouble in getting to the foot of the bluff. Scattered along the river bank we find a small village, Hudson Bay, and Revillion Bro's. fur trading post, post office, blacksmith shop

and police barracks, also an Indian village. We went into camp this July 4th, hoisted the Stars and Stripes, got out our rifles and began a little target practice to give tone as we had no firecrackers. We were yet unobserved by the sleepy villagers. However, the roar of my 45-70 soon brought a crowd, mostly half-breeds. Presently a spider-legged guy spied the American flag floating over our camp. Whereupon, he told us we would have to put the English Jack above our flag. I was arguing the matter with him as we had never been taught to put the English Jack above the Stars and Stripes In the meantime Mac, the maniac, had slipped around and lowered our flag: We resumed our practice. We noticed that Mac could no longer hit the target. We at once knew the reason. And to spare his modesty we called off the match. About this time I noticed that our girls in camp had again hoisted our flag, this time with a large solid red cloth floating above it. I apologized to this guy by telling him that these girls were from Arkansas, and did not know the war was over. He told us that he was not an officer, that he was only telling us what would be required of us.

While here we watched two half-breed Indians loading a small canoe with bundles of all kinds of stuff together with the mail. We inquired of the postmaster where they were going, and he said to Fort Vermilion and intermediate points. They did this in the absence of the steamer. They loaded this little boat until there was only a few inches of it above the water. With one Indian in the back and the other a little back of the front, they pushed off, and began to pull for the middle of the river to strike the main current. In a few minutes more they were turning a bend two miles below.

We board the ferryboat. We are again put through a grilling by the officials about the same as at Lesser Slave lake. A complete description of ourselves and our outfits. The Peace river takes it's name from a treaty having been once concluded between the British government and the Indians on this river. After that the Indians named it the Peace river. At this point it is about a half mile wide at low tide, very deep, and so swift that it stands a ferryboat on edge. The water is a steel gray. From where it comes out of the Rocky Mountains to its junction with the Great Slave river, it has some thre hundred miles of islands. There is no prairie on the south side of it to speak of, only a few small patches, and there is no valley to speak of on the south side. The timber grows right down to the water. There is a fair size steamboat (the Peace River) which plies this river, as described elsewhere. After navigation closes, and the winter sets in, steamboats or wagons are used no more until spring opens, that is anywhere north of Edmonton. Only sleighs are used. A big pair of horses or oxen will pull on a sleigh on the ice five thousand pounds. If you are going into that country in winter, you travel this trail to Athabaska Landing, then you take right up that river on the ice to the mouth of Lesser Slave river, up that river on the ice to the head of it pass out onto Lesser Slave lake, still on the ice and follow up that lake one hundred and twenty miles, all the time on the ice. You will find road ranches at intervals of fifteen to twenty miles from

COOK'S PARTY ON TRAIL. NOTE TALL TREES, 77 FEET TO FIRST LIMB.

Edmonton to Peace river. These ranches are kept by the Indians, and French Canadians. In many places these ranches are only occupied in winter, and then for the sole purpose of catching the travel.

From May until August 1st the Indians leave these ranches, go back off the trail, fish and hunt and lay in a supply of moose meat and fish for the winter. Then about August 1st they come back to put up hay for travel in winter. They have a bunk house, wood and water, cook stove for your use, log stables to put your stock in, and sell you hay. If you have two oxen or two horses, the total charges for one night is fifty cents. More stock in proportion. Most farmers and ranchers get their year's supplies into the Peace country during the winter in this way.

The trading posts throughout this Northwest territory look more to the transient travel, prospectors, trappers and hunters for their winter trade. If you were going into that country to trap through the winter, and did not care to bother about taking your own supplies you could go either to the Hudsons Bay Co., or Revillion Bros.' in any big town in Canada, deposit money with them, take a letter of credit from them. This is good for supplies any place where you find their trading posts which are scattered all over the northern part of Canada clear up to the Arctic ocean.

While it is generally considered safe to travel anywhere on the lakes, or rivers on the ice, yet there is never a winter but what we hear of one to three outfits going under the ice that are never heard of again. We get used to it, as regards danger. The people feel about it as they do about riding on a railroad. While you know there is danger, you go right on. If you hear of some outfit going under, it makes you more careful for a while. The worst danger is getting lost on the big lakes. If it is storming we can't tell where we are sometimes, when the snow blows and covers up the tracks.

Let us now go back to our outfit on the Peace river ferryboat. The ferryboat strikes sand bar about fifty steps before reaching the water's edge. We maneuver our wagons on the boat to try to get a little closer to land. Now the ferry man tells us he can get us no closer. We investigate, and find three-foot drop from the floor of the boat to river bottom. The ferryman drops the boat's apron, we make ready. Mac and I are on either side of the team, Miss Cook mounted on the cow, we make a dash. The river bottom is firm, we make it all right.

Once we are all across, we resume our journey, pull the first bench of the river bluff, and come out on to a narrow valley. A few miles up the valley widens to half mile or more. This extends up the river some twenty-five miles. This valley is all occupied, mostly by Indians, under the allotment plan. About six miles up we come to a Catholic Church Mission. They have good buildings, and other improvements, about fifty acres in cultivation, wheat, oats and barley, a large potato patch, also a nice garden containing many varities of vegetables. The ladies noticed in the house windows some geraniums. They also have here a sawmill and flouring mill. People for many miles bring their wheat here

to have it ground. About six miles more, and we find an English Church Mission. They also have some farm, and garden, a few stock. Everything seems to have plenty to eat. Here a man by the name of Mr. Brick has a seventy-acre wheat field. It looks fine. Here we leave this valley and climb the bluff which is about a mile long. We are three hours climbing this bluff. On top we come to a fine prairie country. Go into camp on a little spring branch, fine fed.

This prairie is about twenty-five miles north and south; 300 east and west, paralleling the river. It is dotted all over with small patches of timber. Much of this timber is suitable for house logs. Then there are springs and spring creeks, and lakes. This is the finest stock country in Canada, including Grand prairie, and Pouce Coupé prairie. The snow does not lay on the ground all winter on account of the chinook winds coming through the Pine pass in the Rockies, to the southwest. From the foot of the Rockies down the river to Fort Vermilion it does not get as cold as it does in Minnesota in the States. Some stock run out here all winter and are not fed anything. They winter all right. The closer we get to the Rocky mountains the warmer it is in winter. There is a fine coat of grass on this prairie. They could cut hay most any place. The soil in most places is a black sandy loam. In some places it is a little on the order of a black waxy. I have seen most all of this prairie, and I found two white families, and one half-breed Indian family. This old Indian told me that these were all the people there were on this prairie. Now if you say that this prairie is no good or it would have been taken, then I say, you are wrong. Because I know. Why do I know? In the first place it is no colder here than at Calgary, Canada, because the chinook winds from the Pacific strike it as they do at Calgary. Then I will say, what did people think of North Dakota up to 1885? I was there that year; they thought it was too cold and no good. In 1885 I drove a herd of cattle from Texas to the Canadian border, and I passed over country where there was a house about every twenty to thirty miles, and these were not farmers but stockmen. The farmers ither did not know of this country, or he did not want it. What is it like today? You could hardly get a claim of one hundred and sixty acres there now. I want to say to you that in ten years from now you will see a family on every quarter section of this Peace River prairie. It is the last West in North America.

After we had got our camp comfortably arranged we took a stroll along the edge of this prairie, shot a deer, and several prairie chickens, eplenishing our supply of fresh meat. We remained in this camp the next day, as the girls said, to get our eyes a little accustomed to the bright light after having been so long in the dark, dismal swamps. Even our cattle seemed to enjoy it. Now, if we had made this trip in a Pullman car, the distance would not have seemed so far. For an illustration of reckoning distances in this country I will refer you to Uncle Sambo's method. I asked him how far it was to Timbuctoo, and he said, "Well, boss, dat depends all togedder on how you goes. If you goes in ox wagon, it is five hundred miles; if you goes in a buggy, it is two hundred miles; if you goes on de

cars, it is twenty-five miles; if you goes by telegram, goodness knows, boss, you is dare now."

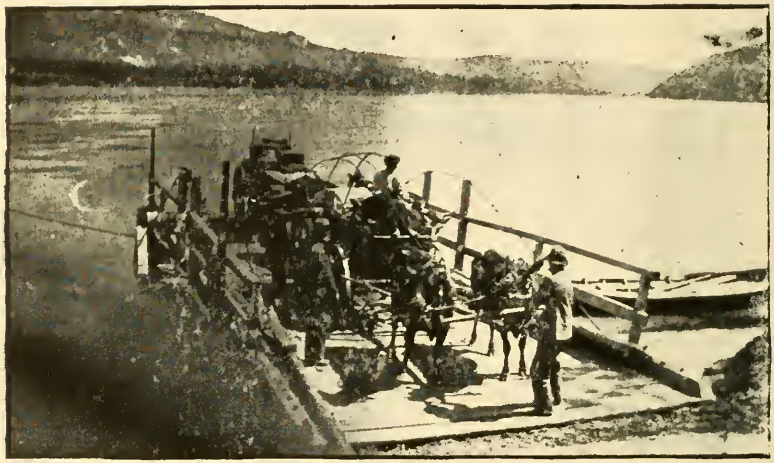
We now resume ou jrourney. This time we have more to interest us. Here stretching out before our eyes is a lovely prairie that we had long looked for. We now make Cole Springs creek, a bright, clear, running stream. Here we find two white families; one was a widow lady with one small boy. She had a claim, a bunch of milk cows, and was making butter to sell to travelers. When she had a chance she sent it to the Landing. She fed no hay or grain in summer, and only hay in winter. She wore good clothes and refused fresh meat from us. That was evidence that she was not hungry. She also had a nice-looking patch of wheat which sufficed for her bread. The other family was engaged in farming and stock raising. They tried hard to locate us near them, but we had written on our wagons, "To the end of the trail or bust." So as they told us that the trail ended farther on we could not stop. They had a very good crop of wheat, oats and barley.

We pass on to Little Burnt river, another beautiful little clear-water river. Here we find one family and some Indian trappers. The man is half French and Indian. He told us he had resided in that section of country for fifty years, and that many stock wintered on the range. The stock is wild horses mostly. He told us of many creeks and streams through that country. There is considerable timber along this little river and fine house logs. The grass is fine everywhere, and very few stock in sight to get it. Here the trail forks, one keeping on west on the north side of the Peace to Fort St. John, the other leans back towards the river and crosses back to the south side at Dunvegan.

We are now some fifteen miles to the north of the river. We move on to another creek that has no name, go into camp for night and half day. We see buffalo heads scattered over the prairies. We shoot some geese and more prairie chickens. We have seen several bear, but have not yet killed any. I will give Mac's reason only for not having done so, and that is that he has not lost any bear. This is a beautiful country, and it is just what we have been looking for; only we are not quite ready to stop, so we pass on to Dunvegan, sixty-five miles above Peace River Landing. The bluff is the same as at the landing. A few miles before we get to the river we come to the bush again. Then we come to the river. Here we find about the same thing as at the Landing—a small village and some Indians. Our idea for crossing back here was to visit Spirit River, Grand Prairie, and Pouce Coupé prairies. These prairies are about all you will hear spoken of in Edmonton, when speaking of the Peace River country. No one seems to want the north side of the river yet, as it is believed that a railroad will soon strike Grand Prairie, and they believe that it will be some time before a railroad will reach the north side of the Peace; hence the Grand Prairie boom.

RECROSSING THE PEACE AT DUNVEGAN.

We now recross the Peace and head for Grand Prairie and Pouce Coupé prairies. There is a ferryboat here. Across the river we find the bluff the same as below. After we climb the mile-high bluff, we go eight miles and come to Spirit River prairie. This is also a very pretty country, half prairie and half bush. The river valley here is



COOK'S PARTY RECROSSING THE PEACE AT DUNVEGAN.

almost all taken up. The river itself is not much, as the water is standing in holes, not running. Leaving this prairie, we go into the regulation bush country again. Next we come to Big Burnt river. Here it rains on us; we camp over night. This is a beautiful little river running through a dense forest. Let me say here, as I have neglected to mention the rainfall. It has rained on us all along; enough to have made a good crop. There is always more rainfall in the bush country than on the prairie. We drift on, cross several nice little creeks, cross a hight divide. From the top of this divide we get our first glimpse of Grand Prairie. It is some ten miles distant. We pass on through the thickest underbrush that we have yet seen.

Now we come to the prairie. Here, at the edge of the prairie, we camp on a little clear water creek. The grass and pea vine here is a foot high. Here the trail forks. One fork crosses the prairie to Grand Prairie City, about 25 miles. The other keeps around the north side to Saskatoon lake. At Grand Prairie City where we expected to see quite a town, according to all reports that we had heard, we find only an unsurveyed plat where the town is to be, if it ever is. Not a cabin, not a furrow plowed, not a stob driven. On the sight of the Grand Prairie City near here we find an old gentleman and his wife. They keep a road ranch and a blacksmith shop. He tells us there is some scattering settlement through that section of the country. We see some. We understand that much of the land has already been filed on. We pass on to the west, across the prairie, come to a settlement that is called Flying Shot. Here is a family, a small grocery store, a few Indians, and some other settlements. A short stop, and we hit the trail again. We now come to Saskatoon Lake. Here we find Hudson Bay and Revillion Bros.' trading posts, post-office and police quarters. We camp here. Good feed. In this vicinity is the largest settlement on Grand Prairie.

Grand Prairie is about fifty by thirty miles. There is considerable timber scattered over it. There are many likes also on this prairie, but they have no inflow or outflow, so they do not have any fish. The water is stagnant and bad, and they are of little value to the country. Many ducks lay and hatch around these lakes. Bear Lake, the largest, is about two by eight miles. It alone has an inflow and outflow; it has fish. I do not like the land so well as that of Peace River, yet there is good land here. It is more rolling and has more stone. I visited a stock ranch on this prairie. They carried about three hundred head of cattle and some horses. They had no sheds. They put up considerable hay. I saw their winter feed ground. It was in the willow brush in the creek bottom. They explained that they hauled their hay on sleighs, and threw it on the ground, and the cattle picked it up. These cattle wintered well, they said. They said they branded forty per cent calves. There is a bunch of wild horses on this prairie that have been here for many years. The Indians catch colts every spring, take them home, and raise them. They say they can't catch the grown horses. That would sound as if stock can and do range outside the year around. There are a few nice farms here, mostly wheat, oats and barley. Most of it looks fairly good. I saw one patch of oats here they told me would make

75 bushels per acre. It would hardly be fair to accuse these people of farming here yet, until they have had a little more time to get in shape. I asked one old Indian if they had any society here. He said, "Not much; there is a few of them bushes over by Bear Lake." Judging from the signs I saw there, the old Indian must have been right. I saw one soul-saving institution there, but no college walls. I saw one man breaking prairie there. He had a fair-sized pair of horses, a fourteen-inch plow, and was doing good work. I saw one man breaking land with one pair of large oxen, fourteen-inch plow. He said he broke one acre per day, and received five dollars per acre, customary price. This man hooked up at seven, plowed until eleven thirty, turned his oxen loose near a lake, fed them nothing, hooked up again at four p. m., plowed till eight, turned his cattle loose again near the lake, still no feed, only the wild grass. The same thing next day, and so forth. This was the fattest pair of cattle that I ever saw being worked. I saw others plowing on this prairie. The soil here is a black sandy loam; it is some lighter than that on the north side of the river. It is my opinion that this prairie will in a few years be settled up. Native raised milch cows here, medium milkers, sell for fifty dollars. Big oxen, $200 to $225; good work horses, $350 to $400 per pair. Provisions: Flour, $14 to $16 per hundred; bacon, 35c to 65c; coffee, 5:c; sugar, 35c; lard, 35e; tea, 75c. Everything else in proportion. Hens, $1 on roost I have not yet seen one Indian plowing. I asked one old breed why this was, and he explained: "It is too hot in the summer time." I then asked how about the winter, whereupon he shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Heap cold."

The Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern are now racing across the continent from Winnipeg to Prince Rupert on the Pacific coast, by way of Edmonton, and through the Yellow Head pass, paralleling each other. They have a gigantic task on their hands on account of the bad condition of much of the country they have to pass over. Judging from what I saw of this work, it will be two years before these roads are completed. In my opinion they will not start another big job until they get thees lines in good shape. Then when any railroad does reach Grand Prairie, it will no doubt extend a branch on to the top of the bluff over the Peace. That would reach all of this Peace River country, as freight would be carried up and down the river in boats. Then by making one portage on the Peace below Fort eVrmilion, freight would be carried to the Arctic in steamers.

Those who are not familiar with the settlement of a new country might ask: "Wher will you get a market for your produce during the absence of a railroad?" In the settlement of our West I found it like this. There was such a constant inflow of settlers each year, and those new arrivals had everything to buy the first year, thus creating a home market for everything that was raised in the country; and as necessity is the mother of invention, people find many ways to get along without a railroad. Every one to their own notion, as the old lady said when she kissd the cow.

It is my belief that railroads and modern civilization do not create happiness. The land shark, the silver-tongued politician and office-

holder, the big business man, the cock-eyed society dude, and hobble skirt, the two dog power preacher, an army of middlemen and all-around grafters, the high court dignitaries to adminster justice; and if you would ask Uncle Sambo to give you his opinion of the average court ruling handed down from the courts of modern civilization, it would read something like this: "Ought is a ought, and figgah is a figgah, and there is no money left for this pore ole niggah." The above is the head end of modernized civilization.

In the early settlements of our West I have seen disputes settled in one hour, or less, without one cent's cost that now take weeks, months and years to settle, and in many instances the cost eats up the property involved. In those days it would often be hundreds of miles to a court of justice, and well it was. In such cases we settled our disputes in this way. When two men claimed the same animal each contending party would name one man to represent him; then these two men would select the third man. The three men would proceed to hear each contending party, and if necessary make a close examination of the property in question. Then by majority vote they would settle the squabble at once and forever. Each contending party had absolute confidence in this court. They could do that because every man in our midst was honest. If any man chanced to have a streak of dishonest blood in his veins, it had no power over him then because he was standing in the presence of honest men; and as honesty ranked higher than position or wealth, he MUST be an honest man, and he WAS an honest man. Then the two contending parties, being honest men themselves, in every case would shake hands, and were the same fast friends as of yore. To do otherwise would be to reflect discredit on the judges; and to reflect discredit on a man in those days was the height of indecency and was foreign to any man's mind. The office of horse wrangler and camp cook was considered the humblest in our ranks, yet the ranch owner or manager, was just as mindful of the respect due these men as he was that due a president. Hence I will use Horace Greeley's dictum, "Young man, go west."

Ten years from now there will be some fine farms on this prairie. After a rest here we hook up and hit the trail for Pouce Coupe prairie, sixty miles to the northwest. When fifteen miles out, but still on this prairie, we come to a creek called Beaver Lodge. Nearby is another one called Red Willow. Here in this country we see quite a sprinkle of settlers, all opening up farms. They seem to be prosperous and happy. They have some stock, all of which are fat. Most all of them use oxen. They feed nothing through the summer and fall; they do all their work on grass, put up hay and shed their work stock. They raise wheat, oats, barley and all kinds of vegetables; they raise many potatoes. On the Wapiti river some twenty miles to the south there is a small sawmill where all settlers in this section get the lumber they use. However, all houses are built of logs and finished off with this lumber. It is not a very good quality but serves the purpose for the present.

We now pull on to Pouce Coupé prairie. This is the worst road we have yet encountered, but the word "can't" could not be found in our vocabulary, so we finally arrived on Pouce Coupé prairie.

Here, close under the Canadian Rockies, we find a beautiful little prairie, about thirty by fifty miles, fairly well watered. Here grows the finest grass and pea vine we have yet seen. In some places I tied grass and pea vine together over a cow's back, it was so tall. This is the warmest spot in Canada in winter. On this prairie there were only one settler and a few Indians. We went into camp, and prospected around the country.

We put provisions on one pony, leaving our girls in camp with another prospecting party. We go up the Pine river and come to a trappers' cabin. They tell us of the wondrously mild climate. They said that they had one cabin burned down in February, losing all their camp equipage, all their clothes, and bedding, except what they had on their backs at the time. They camped out around an open campfire the balance of that winter. All the bedding they had was their furs. They piled them in a heap and crawled under them. They said they did not suffer at all. I asked them about their ponies as they had several. They said the ponies ran out in the open all winter, and came out in the spring fat. No feed of any kind, not even hay. They told us that the Indians to the west and north of that place would bring a bunch of ponies and turn them loose on that prairie in the fall, go away, and not see them any more until the next spring, and that the ponies always came out fat. The chinook winds come through the Pine pass, and this country is right under that pass. The snow was kept melted so that it only lay on a few days after it fell, and at no time did it get deep. One man said it melted almost as soon as it fell. They had a fine garden and were putting up a new cabin for winter. They said that their fur catch averaged them one thousand to fifteen hundred each per year. There were three of them here. They explained to us the boundary lines of their trapping grounds. We had a hard time to get away from them as we were fresh from civilization and had the latest news, only two months old. These men had been in these wilds so long that that was recent news to them. They told us they had not seen a newspaper since March, and that it was a last Christmas issue. I told them that we had seen a bunch of goggle-eyed dudes and some hobble skirts on the steamer Peace River as we crossed the river. They had long faces and asked us many questions about the settlement of the country to the south, and wondered if the grafter was really invading their country. They said they would like to see the country settle with stockmen, as that brought game, instead of driving it out. We asked them about the route to Hudson Hope. They told us to get an old half-breed Indian from the prairie; that he would take us through, as there was hardly any trail, that we could find no trail after a few days' travel from there. We returned to our camp with a big bearskin, and all the meat one old pony could pack. This was the first one we had killed. We employed this old Indian to guide us and headed for Hudson Hope.

The first place of interest was Moberly lake. This is a beautiful lake nestled right at the foot of the towering Canadian Rockies. Here we made a short stop, shoot many ducks, and see some Indians who are amazed to see such an outfit as ours in that part of the wilds. We get a fresh supply of moccasins, as we are now wearing them

instead of shoes. They rest our feet from the coarse, heavy shoes we have been wearing.

GOING ABOARD A RAFT.

We reach the Peace river opposite Hudson Hope. There is no ferry here, so we set to work to make a large raft of logs which our old guide shows us how to make. We put all our outfit on at one time; our guide tells us it is safe. We are only a short distance below where this mighty river comes out of the canyon in the Rocky Mountains. There are many islands in this part of the river. We make a start and hang up on one. Here we go ashore and gather berries, the finest we have yet seen. When we have gathered all we want, we begin to devise ways and means to get our raft clear. We finally make it. The river is so swift that it tosses our raft around like a toy. Our raft is seventy feet long and twenty-five feet wide, made of very large logs and very heavy. The current is so swift that we have trouble to handle it. We hang on another island and after much difficulty got loose. We have by this time drifted several miles down the river. We see a sandbar ahead, and all hands set to work with long poles and manage to run her on to this sandbar, but as our raft draws so much water it runs us aground some distance out in the river.

Here Big Dutch took one pony, jumped him overboard and rode to shore to test the bottom. He found it firm, so after we had worked our raft as far on to this sandbar as we could get, we could see that it was settling down in the sand. We fell to devising a way to get off of this raft and into the water with our wagons. By maneuvering our wagons and stock to one end as much as possible, that caused the front end of the raft to lift up a little. Then we shifted our stuff to the front end which caused that end to sink deeper in the sand. After this maneuvering on board, we still had about a two-foot drop from the top of the raft to the bed of the river. This is too much of a drop to be safe. We had noticed drift coming down. This indicated a rise in the river, which added to our discomfort. I suggested that we pry her off and go on down the river, as that was much easier traveling than pulling the moskeg. The girls said, "You are not talking to us. Let us off." I argued that there were no rapids in the irver for about six hundred miles, and before we reached those we could certainly find a better landing. We could wade ashore and gather feed for our stock. This motion being overruled, Big Dutch suggested that we hook all teams to the raft, and pull it closer to the landing. I pointed out the danger in such a move. Suppose we failed in that undertaking. The weight of the tearms leaving the raft would raise it up in the water and it might float away. Then again, we could not get our stock back on board, which would be necessary in order to hook them to the wagons. Then again, night would catch us in the mean time, with a possible rise in the river which would float our raft away and thus separate us from our teams. That idea was abandoned. We then got out three long-handled shovels, jumped into the waetr, and began dipping up sand and throwing it in front of the raft. With the slowly sinking of the raft under its weight a soon had enough sand piled up to let our wagons down easy. We noticed that the sand was also drifting and piling up against the raft on the upper side, which assured us that we were firmly an-

chored. We now hock four teams to one wagon, Miss Crabb on the wagon, Miss Cook on her pet cow. Everything being ready, I give the word, "Forward, lads," and splash we went into the river. Being apt scholars, we had by this time acquired a fair knowledge of the bullwhacker's vocebulary, which was all that saved us here, as it was a harder pull than we had figured on. But we made dry land O. K. and stopped to blow our stock.

We noticed that our raft had risen some, as though it would float away, but fortunately we had sunk some poles as deep in the sand as we could, and tied the raft to them. Had we not done so, our raft might have parted company with us, leaving two wagons and our Indian guide on board. We make another pull and reach the first bench of the river. Here it is safe to camp. We return with all teams. We have Big Dutch's ponies in front, as they are quicker and make better leaders. Myself and Dutch, being captain and mate, climbed to the hurricane deck of these ponies, as I suggested that under our weight we could guide them better and prevent thir floating away. We now steered for the ship, and after some persuasion got all on board again. We made fast to the second wagon. Everything in readiness once more, we plunged into the river. By this time our educated cows are on to their job and we have no trouble landing the second wagon. This time when we stopped our stock to rest, we noticed that a big drift log has struck our raft and torn it loose from its anchorage. Raft and log were floating away, our faithful Indian guide standing erect, placidly taking in the situation. After drifting some distance, a limb of the log caught in the sand, stopping the whole business on a sandbar. We took this wagon on to camp, then taking all the teams, we go down to the raft as near as we can; then on close examination we find that the raft, not being so heavy, has this time stopped where the water was not so deep. We take the teams near the raft, turn them around in the water; we then tie the coupling pole so the wagon can't come uncoupled, roll the wagon near the end of the raft until the tongue extends out into the water. This wagon not being so heavy, we jump it off into the water and snake it to dry dirt, then stop to blow. This time we notice our guide hanging on to the back end of the wagon. We now have all our outfit off of the raft. It is now getting dark, as it is eleven o'clock p. m. We make camp O. K. and turn everything wild loose, and to the tune of eleven jingling bells we begin the preparation of dinner and supper in one. We have counted nine big bears on the banks and on the islands as we came down today, but we did not shoot at any of them, as we did not need any fresh meat, and then we could not have got to them anyway. It was two a. m. before we laid down to rest.

The next day was spent in getting back on the trail between Hudson Hope and Fort St. John. Here we go into camp. The next day we visited Hudson Hope. We find trading posts, police barracks, and a few Indians. The next day we head down the river to Fort St. John. This is a bush country again, the same as usual, and about all that break the monotony are the towering masses of the Canadian Rockies in the background. we have now crossed the line of the Province of Alberta on to the British Columbia side. Coming to Fort St. John, we

find it near the river surrounded by hills one thousand feet high. Here we talk with some white trappers and Indians, and find that it would be impossible to go any farther north or west with our outfits. So after bidding our Indian guide an affectionate farewell, we point our cows down the river. For about forty miles out we find bush and moskeg, then we come out on to what I have called the Peace River prairie. This is the west end of the prairie that we were on when we turned in to recross the river at Dunvegan on our way up. We drift on down to a point opposite Dunvegan. Here we come to a nice clear water creek on the prairie with a streak of timber. Here we go into camp, and remain several days, during which time my supply of homesick powders has become completely exhausted, and a dissolution of our party is talked, as some want to return to the States, some want to go back to Pouce Coupé, while I and my daughter want to pull on farther north.

FINAL DISSALUTION OF OUR PARTY.

At this time we were met by another party direct from Texas in the States. They went into camp, and we all of us held a general war council. We exchanged experiences and ideas of the country, the advantages and disadvantages, for and against, the past and the present, the people included. Great stress was laid on the decisions arrived at in this medicine gathering. This was considered the turning point in our lives which not alone involved our own future destinies, but perhaps those of our children, a few of our relatives, and some of our friends who would sooner or later follow us up if we settled in this country. We will reckon ourselves as the Donner party in our West, minus the hostile Indians.

After lengthy deliberations we decided on our new plans, or perhaps I should say, brought to a close our original plans. His Royal Majesty, the Honorable Right Reverend Sir Hollingsworth Beaconsfield Crabb, his daughter, Miss Nellie Crabb, and Big Dutch, or Sweet William as he was better known to Miss Crabb, were to go to Pouce Coupe prairie to settle for life. Mac the Maniac, from Maine, was to return to Maine to visit the scenes of his childhood days and scatter flowers on the graves of the dear ones that had died of a broken heart. I moved that he place a clause in that resolve in the form that he reserve the right to return to Canada without notice to the officials of either country in case his identity was discovered there. My move was seconded, and the clause carried. Myself and daughter had chanced to meet two old friends in this new party. They were Mr. and Mrs. Dan Parker. Mr. Parker was an old cowboy chum of mine. His lady was the daughter of another old cowboy friend of mine, they having just arrived from Texas. They were newly married, and I asked if they were on their honeymoon. Mr. Parker said, "We have just passed that station, and now are on the money hunt."

Now comes the final parting with our old friends. In shaking hands with Mr. Crabb, Miss Crabb, and Big Dutch, I wished them good luck, and that they might have the courage and strength to succeed. "Good-by, my dear friend Mac. I hope that your courage and awkwardness may continue with you, and that you may have the gall to return to Maine." With a thank you and dry grin we parted. A day or so after the departure of Miss Crabb, I fancied that my daughter was drooping a little. I suggested that she might

scrape up a few more homesick powders. She turned the tables on me by saying, "Father, I am very sorry, but if you think you really need them I will go through the medicine chest."

It is now three months sinc ewe organized our little traveling party in Edmonton. While we had no doubt at times felt a little vexed at each other on account of some fancied slight of duty by some member of our party, yet to sum it all up, taking everything into consideration, we had had pleasures as well as hardships. We had formed warm ties of friendship for ech other. This sudden breaking up of our party no doubt caused us all more or less regret. The newly arrived party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hightower, two sons and a daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Parker. Mr. Hightower wanted to stay in this country until spring, and they had only a light traveling outfit. As I had just the outfit they wanted, I sold out to them lock, stock and barrel, reserving only my daughter's pet cow. However before we left this camp, I prevailed on my daughter to let her go. I received for her $110. Now the four cows and one bull cost me in Edmonton $240; I sold them for $410. I paid $2.55 per hundred pounds for flour in Edmonton, and sold it for $12 per hundred, and everything esle that we had in proportion. At the final sale and delivery we reserved only one tent, our steel traps, clothing and bedding. Mr. Parker had a pair of ponies and a buckboard, a tent and bedding, and a small cooking outfit.

Mr. Hightower now hooked up his teams, and headed for Grand Prairie, leaving my daughter and myself and Mr. and Mrs. Parker in camp with two ponies and a buckboard, two tents and camp equipage, with our plans not yet fully matured. We now set to making medicine, and we must make our medicine pretty strong, as our party was small; and we proposed to steer from here, straight away into a country that we could get no information of at all from the white settlers, and very little from the Indians, only enough to get us started. But this is what we like about it. We all want to get beyond the limtis of any settlement; as my friend said, "We have never yet worn second-hand goods, and we don't wnat to commence it now. We must have first choice when we settle. We are descendants of Daniel Boonelsm, and we feel as he did when he went West. He thought he would not be crowded for a long time; however, he had not been long in his new far-away abode when he sent word out of his fastness to his friends. "Do you know," said he, "a man has had the impudence to settle within forty miles of me!" We want a country where there is grass, water, fish, and game. We don't want any sign of a wagon road going into our prairie—only a pack trail. Then we hope to never again set our eyes on a silk hat man, a cock-eyed society dude, or a hobble skirt wearer; where we can do away with a double lock on the door, reinforced with a prop. Instead we will have a latch with the string hanging on the outside.

After I have visited tenement houses in New York where four families lived in one sixteen-foot square room, one in each corner, with one small cook stove in the center; the papers and scrap boards picked up from the gutter sufficed for fuel to do the cooking for all, and then the stove was not in use half the time. The direct cause of all this suffering of humanity is the silk hat, the cock-eyed dude, and

the hobble skirt parasites. The more dense the population, the more suffering of humanity. Now is there any wonder that we take this step?

Our plans now settled, I left my daughter with Mr. and Mrs. Parker. I got in his buckboard and went back to Fort St. John and purchased six ponies from the Indians, four for myself and two for Mr. Parker. I sold the buckboard and harness for fifty dollars to an Indian chief, bought four saddles and four pack saddles. Paid twenty-five to fifty dollars for the ponies, five dollars for pack saddles, and twenty to thirty for the riding saddles. I then returned to camp. We gave the ladies first choice of ponies. We put riding saddles on four and pack saddles on four. I put my bedding and the canvas boat on one pony, my daughter's bedding, her tent, and the grub sack on one. My daughter complained that her pony had the heaviest load. I told her to heft the grub sack. She did and said no more.

Our eight ponies were soon saddled and packed. They were standing in the warm sunshine, apparently dozing and perhaps dreaming of their former masters, the Red Men. We kicked over the few remaining articles in camp, such as the late papers, telling of the Spanish-American war, the massacre of General Custer, etc., sacks, wearing apparel that had served us through the moskegs, and other wearing apparel that was at all suggestive of civilization, and more particularly to discover if we were leaving anything that would reveal our identity or afford any clew to our trail. Among this cast-off wearing apparel I discovered Mr. Parker's late wedding suit. I called his attention to this. He said, "Let her ride. Judging from my late experiences, I shall never want another wedding suit."

I gave the first command, "Mount." Mrs. Parker walked to her pack pony, and jerked the grass out of the bell on the pony's neck and gave it a quick rattle. The suddenness of this awoke the half-sleeping ponies and frightened them so that they all ran. Fortunately I had got hold of my pony. I mounted and gave chase. I soon got in front of the stampeded ponies. Taking off my large Texas sombrero, I began whipping them in the face. I soon had them circled toward camp, and after a lot of coaxing and maneuvering, we managed to get hold of all of them. Mrs. Parker explained the meaning of her action by saying that she intended to ring the bell as the Liberty Bell. I once more gave the command, "Mount." I mounted on my pony, "Rain-in-the-Face," this being the name of the Indian chief from whom I bought him. My daughter had named her pony "Creole Sue." Mr. Parker had named his "Billy the Kid," this being the name of the leader of a band of outlaws in New Mexico. The pony must have understood that he was named after the leader of outlaws, as he was the leader in the recent stampede, and he did not want his master to be disappointed in him; hence his taking the lead. Mrs. Parker named her pony "Red Squaw." The other ponies we called our pack ponies. Now after our past experiences, and as we had won out so far, there was no fear but that we would further succeed, as we were now at home—on the hurricane deck of a pony.

We make the start—then we halt, look at the surrounding country and at the sun. I put a finger in my mouth, dampen it and hold

it up to find out where the wind is from, as the cold side of the finger will always indicate the direction of the wind. I then took out my compass and found that we were headed due west. Headed west when we should have headed north was due to natural instinct with me—"Go West." We now faced about due north. We traveled that day until late before we stopped for camp, as we had had fairly good going. Mind you, we had started out across the prairie without any sign of a trail.

The second day out we came into an Indian pack trail. There were no signs of its having been traveled for a long time; yet we followed it, as it seemed to be headed for some objective point. Late in the afternoon, and after having left the prairie, traveling through the bush for some time, we came to a small prairie with a nice little creek. Here we found an old Indian camping ground and made camp there. The feed was very fine. The mosquitoes were bad, too, but we had covers for our horses. We also made smudges at night for them. The horse were not strangers to this kind of life, as they seemed perfectly contented. All that was new to them was their covers to keep the mosquitoes off, but they showed their appreciation for thm insomuch as they did not get frightened at them. We noticed them looking at each other in an effort to recognize one another. About sunset we saw our ponies, all looking down the stream as though they saw something. True to our raising, we all grabbed our guns, as in our West this sign would many times mean the approach of hostile Indians. I beckoned for silence, and keeping to some brush along the creek bank, I moved carefully along. Presently I saw a band of moose emerge from the bush, evidently to spend the night on this little prairie. They were nipping the pea vine and coming toward me. I kept moving toward them. They had not yet noticed our ponies, as in that wild country they were not accustomed to meeting an enemy; hence they were not looking for one. When I got within range I sat flat on the ground. About this time they all saw our horses and stopped to look. I singled out a big bull and fired. He made a lunge forward and fell. The others turned and went into the bush. We saw no more of them. I walked out into the clearing and motioned to camp for all to come. They all came running. I told the ladies to remain here until Dan, my friend, and I could make sure he was dead before they got too close to him. He was very dead, as one shot from my old reliable forty-five-seventy was generally sufficient. We took the hide off of one hind leg and hip, took that quarter to camp, and feasted.

The next day we circled around and found a trail leading out of the prairie, straight north through the bush. We now get out of camp so late that we don't' cook at noon, only stop to let our ponies graze. We eat a cold lunch and drift on. The country is about the regulation bush with small springs, creeks and moskegs. We follow this Indian trail, although it is in many places hard to trace where it leaves an opening in the timber, or a little prairie. It is not hard to find in the bush, as to get off of it we could not go at all, on account of so much moskeg and timber fall. It has become evident to us now that this trail leads for a long way, as it seems to keep about the same direction. Then we have not seen so much as a bush cut in the way of improvements, and one old Indian had told us of a fine prairie far to the north with

only a pack trail leading to it. However, this trail was always wide enough to admit the passage of a wagon; yet it showed no signs of ever having a wagon over it. Then when the old Indian was describing this trail and country to us he indicated by Indian signs that it had been many winters since any one had gone so far into that country. We have studied this trail long and thoughtfully, and we have now concluded that it leads to something good. We keep on going. The next day out we find another camp ground, but not so plain as the first. This would indicate that another trail, and probably a shorter one, had somewhere branched off to some winter hunting camp, but we failed to notice it. The second night is as the first, only we see no moose.

The next day in the afternoon we come out into a higher country. The underbrush is dense, but the trees are not so large and thick, and there is very little moskeg. We seem to be on a high divide, as though we were between two large water courses. We now come to a lovely little prairie one mile wide and some four miles long. Here is a spring branch and a camp ground. We have noticed for some distance back more moose sign than usual. We noticed a bunch of stock on this prairie. I looked at every member of our party. They looked more or less disappointed, as if these were cattle it would mean that we were not yet out of the settlements. We take out our field glasses and find that it is a bunch of moose. This is fine, as our fresh meat is getting stale. We go into camp, hobble our horses, tie one pony up so that in case the moose should run that way and stampede the ponies we would not be afoot. We now take three rifles, and the ladies go with us. We keep in the cover of some small bunches of brush dodging from one to another. Finally after we are all about played out and it is getting late, we got close enough to shoot. The moose have now winded us, and some of them come toward us. The ladies get a little nervous. We tell them to keep down in the small brush. The moose kept coming until they had got quite close. I handed my rifle to Mrs. Parker and told the two ladies to both shoot at the moose closest to us. If they failed to get him, Dan was to stop him. The two rifles cracked at the same time. The moose staggered and ran, then he circled and came for us. I grabbed my sixshooter. Just then the moose fell. The ladies had reloaded and I told them to shoot him again. Crack, crack, went two rifles. The moose jumped up, circled and came for us. I motioned Dan not to shoot yet, but this was getting too close quarters for the ladies and they ran some distance back. The moose again fell, this time only a few steps from us. He then turned on his side, gave a few kicks, and was dead. Dan and I prepared to sit up with the ladies that night. Before we broke camp the next day we look over this prairie for signs of settlements. We find some old cabins and judge them to be Indian trappers' cabins, only used in winter. We locate our trail still leading north. This high country continues until in the afternoon, then it seems to get lower, the timber getting some larger. At evening we find a small opening and camp. We find a beautiful little lake in this opening with lots of moose sign. That night there was not a sound to break the stillness except the lone howl of a wolf.

The next day we hit the trail about as usual. About the same country, only the moskeg is coming back. At noon we come to a small river. Here we find a trapper's cabin and fresher signs than common. The

trail leading out from here is fresher than common. One of our pack ponies now wants to take the lead. We put him back, but he comes up again, and gets in the lead. This is plain to Dan and me. We know that this pony knows of a ranch ahead, and is anxious to get to it. We leave this river and climb a divide, almost like the day before. At noon we come to a small prairie and a small lake. We now see what we are sure is cattle sign. We camp here over night and make a thorough investigation of the country around and find an old cabin almost rotted down. We find also some horse sign. Upon close inspection the horse had a rider, as he was not grazing at any place where we found his tracks. While we were out looking around, we spied a large cinnamon bear. Dan and I slipped up and shot at him, and upon close inspection we found that either shot would have been sufficient to have killed him. We took the ladies out to see him, and they told us that so long as it showed that either shot would have killed him, it showed we were not scared. Now we had more meat. We had seen ducks on all the lakes we had passed. We had seen bear tracks before on this trip, but no bear. We now start supper early. We have grown tired of fried meat, and we put a bear rib on a green stick before the fire, and roast it. We then show the ladies a new way to cook bread. We open the flour sack, make the dough in the sack, roll it in long rolls the size of a man's thumb, wind this closely around a green stick, hold it to the fire and keep turning it until it is done. That night we take a nice roast, roll it in a piece of the bear's hide, hollow out a hole in the campfire, put it in that and cover it up with ashes. We then build a good fire on it, replenish it at bed time, and the next morning we have the loveliest roast, nice and brown.

We hit the trail again. At noon we made a short stop, finished up this cold roast and went again. We are now traveling down grade on a gently rolling ridge. We now suddenly come to an opening in the timber. We are on high ground. We see some few miles off, and on considerably lower ground, just what we have been looking for—a prairie which looks to be five or six miles wide, and perhaps fifteen miles long. We take out our glasses, see some small lakes and a few cattle grazing. Judging from the low ground between the two ranges of hills, there might be a river in the valley. We spur up a little, and about six p. m. we arrive at the foot of this high ridge. We come suddenly upon a most beautiful little river—clear, sparkling water, about twenty steps wide, and one foot deep, sand and gravel bottom. We see fish in the river. We have no difficulty in crossing. We see cow sign. We ride up the bank, and are on the most beautiful prairie that we have yet seen in Canada. It is almost level with a gentle slope to the river. It is dotted over with a few small knolls. These were covered over with small trees which added to the beauty of the prairie. It now shows to be surrounded by high hills to the south and north. We can see the country far to the west through the opening the river makes, while below the river seems to make a short turn, cutting off the view. We go into camp here on the bank of the river, and hobble our ponies. The pony that wanted to get in the lead so much grazes a little while, then raises his head, looks down the river, and across the prairie, while the other ponies pay no attention, only to delicious grass and pea vine. This pony's actions convince us that he has in the past spent some happy

days on this prairie. We afterwards learned that this pony had been kept on this prairie. We are now fish hungry, so we get out some fishing tackle and soon land some fine mountain trout, as fine as we have ever seen in any country. During the night we hear a cow bawl. We are about half and half—pleased and displeased. We would like to see some one to talk with about the country, then we want this prairie all to ourselves in case we don't find anything better.

We now rise early, have breakfast, and are off. We follow down the river east keeping on the prairie. We go about three miles and find a bunch of cattle. They resemble very much the old-fashioned Texas long-horned that we were raised on, says Dan. We go a little further and strike a plain beaten path leading back toward the river. We follow this a short distance and come to some cabins under the first bench of the river, and close by it was a lovely little garden in a little vallen that extends far down the river. We sit here on our ponies while our eyes feast on the surrounding beauties. In front of us runs this beautiful little river. Just across the river the hills set in, and gradually rising higher and higher until they reach a height of some seven hundred feet. In the background back of us the prairie covered all over with fine grass and pea vine, in many places so tall as to almost hide a calf. This prairie proves to be five miles wide and about fifteen miles long However. it is cut into in several places by a streak of timber. To the back of us at the far edge of the prairie rises abruptly a range of mountains two thousand feet high. Just below us they bend to the left or northeast. These mountains are covered with a dense growth of timber and fine feed. To the west of us some seven miles the prairie stops and the hills set in. We can see far up this depression made between the hills by the river. In the distance the hills seem to tower one above the other, as they drop back, leaving the impression that it was not very far to the head of this river, that it might rise in those high hills. This proves correct, as this is a short tributary of the Hay river, and it is only fifteen miles proper to the head of this river, seven miles to the west end of the prairie. To the east of us the river makes a bend, and shuts out our view. The hills on both sides seem to get higher as they go east, or northeast. Under our feet the soil is a black sandy loam and very rich. A fair-sized pair of oxen can break it easily. There are many springs in the bluffs to the north which form creeks that run into this little river after crossing this prairie, making it a perfect paradise for man and beast. Only one thing more to consider. and that we find by raising our eyes to the skies. We observe the deepest of deep blue skies, with the bright warm rays of a northern sun shining straight down on us. This completes the panorama. We look to the left, and see some old cabins. These are cow barns. Some hay stacks are also in sight. Just below this is a small patch of wheat. some four or five acres. and about two acres of potatoes. This completes the improvements in sight of us. We see a few chickens moving about the place. There are no dogs to bark at us. We have scanned the prairie with our glasses, and are quite sure that there are no more settlements to the west of us. and we want this ranch. Now shall we approach the owner? I am elected spokesman in that respect

We now descend this little bank to the cabins, then we call but get

COOK'S PARTY ARRIVING AT HIS RANCH. NOTE LADIES IN MEN'S ATTIRE.

no answer. I dismount, go to the door and knock. A gruff voice from within says "Come in." As from natural instinct, I adjusted my revolver so that it would be handy. Opening the door with my left hand, I stepped inside. Here in one corner of the room on a bed composed of two poles stuck in the cracks of the cabin wall, and meeting on one tool for a bed post, poles laid across, hay put on them, then spread over the hay to lay on was a lot of furs, also furs for covering. Here lay an old man with long gray hair and long beard covering his face all over. He pointed to a stool, a block of wood having been sawed off a round log, with three holes bored in it and sticks driven in for legs. I seated myself on it. I noticed he was eyeing me all the time with wonder. He asked me where I was going, where from, what kind of an outfit I had, and many other questions faster than I could answer them. When I told him there were ladies in my party he raised himself up on one elbow, and his wrinkled face beamed with smiles. His heretofore hard-looking eyes now turned to a more mild hue, and fairly danced in his head. Thinks I, "Who would have thought it of you!" Then he said, "It has been many years since I had a lady visitor at my ranch, and your guide—who is he?" "My dear sir, I have to claim that honor for myself." "And you have never been in this valley before?" "No, sir." "Then you are a pioneer! Let me shake your hand." His hand was clammy. "Be seated, my friend. Now tell me more about your party, and where they are." I described our party and where they were. He said, "Then bring them in." I suggested that we were well equipped for a camping, and perhaps it might be as well for us to go into camp nearby and then visit with him. He agreed that we go into camp on this little river above the cabins, and we all visit this old man in his cabin. He receives us very cordially. I notice that he has not rearranged anything in the cabin since I was in. I infer by this that he is not able to get around much, and I ask him about his afflictions. He said that he could not explain exactly what his trouble was. He said, "I have these spells about twice a year, and I seem to get worse each time." He did most of the talking and asked many questions about the outside world, as he said that he seldom ever went anywhere. He told us that he was a native of Canada, and that he had spent most of his life trapping and hunting, that he built these cabins about sixteen years ago and had spent most of his life here since that time. I asked him how he managed to do so much work as it seemed to me was necessary on this place, and he said there was a half breed Indian family on the lower end of the prairie whom he had employed to help him at times when he was able to be out to superintend the work. After we had talked for an hour or more, and as soon as I could get a word in edgewise, I asked if there was anything our party could do for him that would assist him in his immediate wants, and he said that if the ladies would cook him a chicken as only a lady can cook them, it would help him out powerfully. I asked what kind of chicken I should catch. "A young rooster," he said. Dan took his thirty-thirty, and soon had a chicken. Mrs. Parker cooked it at our camp and we took it to him. He ate most all of it at one meal. He told us to help ourselves to anything on the place—chickens, pigs, garden stuffs, etc. We thanked him and sampled his garden stuffs, which we found to be most excellent, in the way of cabbage, potatoes, onions, carrots, tomatoes, and sweet corn.

His large yellow chickens looked very tempting, but we had plenty of fresh meat. This was the fifteenth of August, 1910.

We took it in turns visiting this old man. This old gentleman offered to share his quarters with us. He told us if we needed fresh meat to kill a calf, that he had one hundred and thirty-eight head of fat cattle grazing on that prairie. He told us that we must not leave him until he can show us over the country some. I told him we would stop here a week or so. A couple of days later we hook up a team of the old gent's horses to his wagon, assist him in the wagon, and we take a look over the prairie and at his cattle. He tells us of the wonderful possibilities for younegr men on that place, for he said, "Aside from the ranch proposition, it is a fine place for trappers in winter." He had a big lot of old rusty traps that he used in former years. He told us that there were no more prairies as large as that one until you would get north and east of Great Bear lake. We find him very interesting, as he has traveled over most of Canada. We have been taking his meals to him and he is now feeling better. He is moving around some. I told him we were looking for a cow ranch and wanted a prairie country, and that I guessed we would drift on until we found it. Now the old gent seemed to realize that he could no longer handle his place and stock, and thought perhaps we might settle on that prairie, so he said, "Let me sell out to you." I told him I would talk to my friends. The next day we asked him to set a price on his outfit. He did and we bought him out. We were to take him to Peace River Landing, where he could get transportation for Edmonton, as he said he intended visiting relatives in eastern Canada. He told us of another route leading from this prairie south to the Peace, that is better than the one we come in on, but he said it would be impossible to get a wagon over either trail until the moskeg froze over, and unless he got better he could not ride horseback. We arrange to keep him with us until sleighing is good, then take him to Peace River Landing.

Now comes the invoicing after a week's nursing of the old gent by our ladies, with vegetable dinners, yellow-legged chickens, and coffee with cream for breakfast, the old gent is soon feeling many years younger, and is able to move around the place. The invoicing once complete, we pile in the yard moose, elk, caribou and deer horns and skins of every animal known to Canada. We rearranged the old gent's bed in a side room, and fixed him a table of a box for his grease lamp. This was a tin can filled with grease, a rag twisted tight, and placed in the grease for a wick. We spread skins on the dirt floor for a carpet, found an old wash tub that is full of holes, set it in the loose dirt, take some bullets out of shells, melt them and run lead in the holes, heat some water on the old-fashioned fireplace, and Dan and I give the old man a hot bath. Each of us gave him a suit of our underwear. We comb his long, shaggy hair, trim his whiskers, clean his finger nails, but draw the line at toe nails, partly on account of the absence of a disinfectant. Then Dan points out the danger of breaking our hunting knives. He says that nothing short of the horseshoe nippers would feaze them. We take an elk head with long horns, take some sacks and rawhide whangs cut from a moose hide, make a large armchair, spread some skins over this and it makes a chair. We place some late papers on the table, dated Winnipeg, April 4th, and May 2d, 1910, etc., cleaned out

the old man's pipe, gave him a sack of tobacco and some matches, and made him sit in this chair to read the latest daily newspapers The old man looks around in the room at the ornaments hanging on the wall, such as Navajo blankets, cowboy coat of arms, a large Texas map. He asked, "Where was youzes raised?" I stepped up to the Texas map, made a circle around it. and said, "Right here." "Then," said he, "sit down right here and give me a waybill to that country. That is where I want to spend the balance of my life."

"In that case," said I, "I will give you a few introductory hints for your guidance as a new settler there." I gave him a letter to my club in the Panhandle of Texas, with a recommendation for membership, and with all the diplomacy that I could command I told the old gent that in that country, to ask a man his name, or where he was from, was considered a mark of great disrespect. I told him that in the early settlements of Texas. that the general court procedure was about as follows: First a carefully worded invitation from the sheriff was sent to the party to be tried, that at his earliest convenience he was most cordially invited to attend Judge o-and-So's court, to be held at the Lone Cottonwood Tree on the head of Bitter creek. On receipt of the invitation, the culprit, accompanied by a few friends and his attorney, all of whom must be crack shots, with their rifles and sixshooters, appear before the court. The culprit was taken to one side and informed of the charges against him. Everything now being ready for trial, the court asked, and answered himself the following questions. The Court: "First your name. I will say John Doe. Your age I will say is not old. Your residence I will say is here at present. Your occupation I will say bartender." At this the culprit, his friends and attorney jump to their feet, with sixshooters in hand, and enter a denial. Whereupon the Court would explain by saying. "You are attending the bar of my court." Attorney, "Objection withdrawn." The Court: "I see that you and your attorneys are properly armed. Mr. Sheriff. do you consider the weapons presented here are of the proper calibre to insure the culprit justice in the premises?" Whereupon the sheriff arose. saluted the culprit and the court, and answered in the affirmative. The Court: "Now, gentlemen of the jury, you have all heard the sheriff. You will now examine your sixshooters, put fresh caps on them, and all of you who care to be sworn, please stand up: those to the contrary remain seated. We will now proceed with the trial." (Let no man cast a slur on a Texas court.)

We are now ready to round up the cattle. and receive them. Our little party of four start on the circle. We find the cattle in a little while. and we are more than satisfied, as they are a nice bunch of cattle. We are short a few. which the old man tells us are down at the Indian camp. He has loaned them to the Indian to milk. We count out one hundred and thirty-two head. We do not brand them as would be customary in Texas in the transfer of a herd of cattle. Dan goes after the Indian for a witness in this transaction. and counts the other cattle. We also receive sixteen head of buffalo and nine head of moose. In this deal we have received two very fine oxen and three work horses. The old gent tells us that we must get busy with our hay for winter if we would feed much.

We now make ourselves as comfortable as possible in our new quar-

ters. However, we use our tents some. The first thing we do is to take care of our vegetables and little crop. The old gent explains to us how he manages everything in winter. We put up about fifty tons of hay and pea vine. This with what hay we have from last year we make out fine. We now get in our wood for winter. We then overhaul our cow sheds, clean them up, and put them in shape for winter. The old gent in the meantime is able to get around, and shows us how to manage everything. The next thing is to overhaul our traps, and get them ready for the winter catch. We want to trap some, as it will be necessary for Dan and me to have some exercise during the long winter that is to follow. The old gent goes through the whole performance of selecting the trapping grounds, setting the traps, placing the baits, telling us when and how to attend the traps, how to care for our furs, and gives us much general information on trapping.

All this time our ladies have been putting away butter for winter use. The old gnt tells us where to find all the moose we want. Dan and I take eight ponies, about one week's grub, make a hunt, or rather I should say, a killing. In four days we returned with all the moose meat and one bear that six ponies could pack. We cut it up in large chunks, three pieces to the hind quarter, salt it down on the hide for two days, then hang it on a scaffold, smoke it a few days, then hang it in the cellar, just as we used to do our buffalo meat on the plains of Texas, except that in Texas we left it on the scaffold all winter. Our meat has kept sweet and fresh all winter. While we are on this hunt the old gent and our ladies have been catching and preparing fish for winter use in the genuine native style. These also prove fine eating. We now roll our tents up and go into our winter quarters, as other natives do.

A description of the country to the east and north in general. Theer is no use to go into details or whip the devil around the stump for or against the country. I will say that all the country to the east of this point to Hudson's Bay and north to Alaska is with few exceptions a forest. There are some few little patches of prairie but in comparison to the whole country, they are so small and so widely scattered that they are of little consequence. The upper Peace River country to the south and west of this point is the best, and about all the country north of the Athabaska river that is worthy of consideration by the farmer and homebuilder. The country to the east has some lumber, very little mineral, good fishing, some hunting and good trapping. The country to the north has some lumber, some fishing, but is best for mineral and fur-bearing animals. However the barren lands to the north and east of Great Bear lake are not to be classed with the country just described, as it is not much better than the bed of the ocean. There are two herds of buffalo in that world around Great Slave lake. There is one herd to the west of this point. Then our little herd here is all the buffalo that I have any knowledge of on the open range.

This November the 8th we have had some snow. The moskeg is froze. The old gent tells us it is safe to start out with a sleigh. I get up the big oxen and get my sleigh in order. I have put in the sleigh 20 sacks of wheat that the Indians have thrashed for us. This is the way the Indians thrash the wheat. They take an armful of wheat straw, lay it on a large canvas. With a stick in each hand they pound

it until all the wheat is out of the straw. They remove that and get more; keep this up until they have all the wheat they want; and it would surprise you the amount of wheat one Indian family can thrash in a day. I take this wheat to the Catholic mission flour mill on Peace river and bring the flour back home. The old gent shows me another route that is in eight days' travel of here. At the Landing we meet a prospectors' outfit. They started out too late and here concluded to sell out and return to Edmonton. I buy their goods which is plenty to run us one year. They arrange to take the old gent back to Edmonton. I return to our ranch and find them all well, and they are surprised to see me back so soon. The first thing my daughter did was to show me a large bear hide tacked on the cabin. Dan had shot it from the cabin door. The ladies said they also shot it but Dan said it had been dead long enough to have been a stinker in warm weather when they shot it.

After I had got everything put away, I got out three large lamps that I had bought, filled them with coal oil, and got out a sack of newspapers, and magazines, and we all read.

The next day Dan and I saddled our ponies and rode out on the prairie. The snow was about eight inches deep. Dan had set 160 steel traps along the river and had caught some furs. He looked after those up the river and I looked after those down the river. We kept two milk cows and two ponies in the barn all the time. The balance of the stock ran outside, came in at night, and stood in the shed. We fed hay to all night and morning. On days that the wind did not blow too hard the stock went out on the prairie and fed. The ponies would paw the snow off of a spot and then graze. I have seen old cows follow the ponies, and when a pony would move away from a place that he had pawed the snow off of, the old cow would rush up and go to feeding on that spot. While our buffalo were gentle enough to let us ride very close to them, yet they never came under the sheds and mixed but little with the cattle. We were trying to get them tamer. During the worst of the winter we put hay out for them, but they had no regularity for coming around, as at times they would go away, and we would not see them for several days. Then they would come and remain close by for several days.

There is a long deep hole in the river opposite the cabins. When we want fish we cut a hole in the ice which is from eight to twelve inches thick. In a few hours we have several fine fish. We cover the hole up again. We have a nice little spring back of the barn. It is arranged so as to pass through a part of the barn for our stock. After it passes through the barn it runs into a deep gulch. The ice forms in the gulch several feet deep. We cut a channel in the ice, and the water goes into the river under the ice. The buffalo never drink in winter. They eat snow altogether, like the cattle in the Dakotas. On the open range they rarely ever get any water in winter. It is better that they don't where they get plenty of snow. Every day is about the same with us all winter. Dan and I attend our traps and stock, and keep a good fire in the cabin. Our vegetables run us most all winter; potatoes all winter. Our smoked meat runs us all winter. We killed one large moose during the winter and hung it up in one corner of a cabin thinking we would have it fresh. It froze so hard

we could not cut it, only with an ax. Then when it was struck with an ax it would fly off in little pieces like chopping on a log. Then the taste was all out; it was not much good.

It is now spring, April tenth. The snow is all gone off the level. We see snow on the mountains to the north of us until June. On April fifteenth we saw the first green leaf, and in ten days they were full grown. We never in our lives saw plants leave out so quickly before.

Our river here was clear of ice except along the bank, on April 25th. On April first we took in all our traps. We had a nice lot of furs. We had caught twenty-two large wolves. The black fox is the trapper's choice, as one choice black fox hide will bring all the way from nine to fifteen hundred dollars. On the first day of May we have not lost one cow, horse, or buffalo. Some of the old cows got pretty thin, but aside from that all the stock came through in good condition. Next winter when the fur is good we will kill about three of the oldest buffalo bulls, as they got poor this winter.

A WINTER'S FUR CATCH.

Dan starts to plow the garden today. My daughter and I start to Edmonton with our furs. The days are now nice and warm, the nights are cool. It requires six ponies to pack our furs and camp outfit. We start for the head of steamboat navigation on Lesser Slave lake. We arrive here without any trouble; farmers are plowing and seeding. We laern that we will have to wait a few days for a steamer. We see a man who has a small boat to sell. He tells us we could take this boat and go through the lake in one day with a sail. Then down the Lesser Slave river, over the rapids, and out into the Athabaska river; and down that river to Athabaska Landing in two days. My daughter suggests that we take the boat, and try it as we have not yet traveled in that way. I arrange with a rancher to keep our ponies for us until we return from Edmonton. I paid twenty dollars for the boat and got the man to show us how to tack sail; placed all our stuff in it, hoisted sail, and started. The first day is fine. We pass Shaw's Point and enter the lake proper. Here a heavy sea strikes us and we are forced to make for shelter. We stretch tents and go into camp for the night. Next morning we hoist sail and head for open sea. We are almost five miles out, when we notice on our right white caps, indicating rough water. Now a high wind strikes us, and a heavy sea is on us. We turn with the wind, and head for land as fast as we can. We must now be traveling twenty miles an hour; our little boat, the "Happy Rover," seems to fairly jump from one wave to another. Fortunately about a quarter of a mile from shore we strike into some high tool grass that breaks the rough water. We see a point of land projecting out into the water. I steered around it, and as we pass I make a turn, head for some high grass, and run into it. Here we find the water very smooth and very shallow. I now maneuver to make a landing, and see some logs lying on the shore. Here I find a good landing, furl sail, use a pole, and make a landing. We go ashore and stand for a few minutes watching the white-capped waves on the lake, as they roll high in the air, then break, and fly in every direction. We look in our boat now and realize the narrow escape we have run from being sunk, when we discover our boat has considerable water in it and we are wet to the skin. We now breathe a sigh of relief. I dip the water out

of the boat, and find that no serious damage has been done, as we had arranged our things in the boat allowing for some water. I now pile some poles together, and we soon have a fire. I stretch the tent which is wet, as we had it, spread over our cargo. I open up our war bag, and get out some dry clothes. We hang our wet clothes on a bunch of nearby bushes to dry. I now proceed to tie our boat firmly to some small willow bushes. We get our rifles, and give them an overhauling.

About this time I notice a large bull moose come out of the timber a short distance from us, and head straight for the lake. He makes no halt, but wades in and keeps straight on as if to cross the lake. It is here about fifteen miles wide. He goes on and on; we watch him until he goes out of sight. The waves are rolling so high we can't see him after a few minutes. Presently we saw him coming back; this time he was headed straight for our camp. He had not yet seen us. We grab our rifles, run out a short distance from camp, and waited for him. When he had got into water where he could wade, he stopped, and shook his head as if to get the water out of his eyes, and rested for some time. He then moved on toward us until he had got within a few hundred yards, when he saw our tents. He turned to one side, and came on. We waited until he got clear of the water. I then put my hat on the muzzle of my gun, and held it up above the tall grass. He saw this, and stopped to look at it. We both shot him and he fell in his tracks. We took his hide off, and all the meat we wanted. I then took off his horns which were very beautiful; they were still in the velvet. My daughter stood in our boat and held the horns while I took her picture. Now this moose had evidently crossed the lake on the ice and thought he could cross any time, or else he had been whipped by another bull, and so closely pursued that he took this method to get away from him.

We remain here until the next morning. With favorable wind we hoist sail and put to sea. We have better success. We skimmed along over the water at about ten miles an hour. A few miles before we passed out of the lake we saw an outfit on the trail. I changed my sail; went ashore, and made a picture. It was two Frenchmen from the old country going to Peace river to get homestead land. They had one small ox, and a two-wheeled cart. When I first turned my field glasses on them one man was in the lead helping the ox pull, while the other one did the whipping. (Note the trail.) The cart is standing in the middle of the trail here. This is some of the road that I have told you about before. We put to sea again. This time when within two miles of the head of Lesser Slave river where we would pass out of the lake into the river, we find many sand bars, and it is a mean place to boat. Now the wind changes to our side and blows a gale. We are once more forced to put into harbor. The wind is so strong we have no choice, only to drift with it. We are blown far out on a sandy beach; tie our boat to a drift log until morning. We rise early; there is no wind. We find our boat is a hundred feet from the water. Once back in the lake, we make a start to find the river. There is now a dense fog hanging over the lake compelling us to hug close to the shore line. After considerable difficulty in crossing sand bars, we find the river and pass out of the lake. A mile down the river we stop for breakfast opposite an Indian village. Some Indians come out to trade

with us. We now pass on down; this is Slave river. We arrive at the rapids. It is very dangerous to run these rapids with a loaded boat. I pay an Indian to take our boat over the rapids to the junction with the Athabaska. We make portage, by Indian wagon; find Indian and boat all O. K. We are now at Mirror Landing.

We load our boat, and pass out onto the mighty Athabaska river. The Indians tell us of three rapids that we must be careful in passing. They tell us to always keep to the middle of the river in the deepest water, as they point out the danger of striking a boulder, and becoming upset. The current takes us about six miles an hour, then the sail moves us along about ten or twelve miles an hour. We passed these rapids, but I fear we will never look like anything again. Night is close on us and we must camp. I select a place to stop, but we are going so fast that I failed to land, so I selected another place a mile or so farther down and by a scratch managed to stop here. We tied our boat to a large drift log and go into camp. A dense forest on both sides as usual, and a wild looking country this is. We have supper and stretch a tent. My daughter retires. I am sitting by a big fire listening to the roar of the water passing over a rapid below us that we must pass over, when presently just back of us in the timber, a pack of wolves opened up howling which added to the lonesomeness of the camp. Presently my daughter called out: "Father, fire the big gun." I fired in the direction of the wolves, and we heard no more from them. The echo of the big gun in the forest across the river as it died away lent weirdness to the occasion. It now began to rain, and I had to go in. With the patter of the rain on the tent I soon fell asleep.

The next morning the sun rose bright and clear. We run those rapids, make a turn in the river, and come in view of the village of Athabaska Landing. We pull up to the landing among the many boats lying at the wharf, go to the hotel and get dinner, and arrange for transportation to Edmonton. We had sold our boat.

Arriving in Edmonton we go to a hotel. We had no sooner hit the hotel, than we were attacked by one of these silk-hat, goggle-eyed, cut-away, society dudes. He asked me where I was from. True to my raising, I took this as an insult. I raised myself, stood erect, and made ready for what would follow. I told him I was from Bitter Creek, and that the higher up, the worse they got; and I was from the head.

My furs in the sample room opened up and arranged to the best advantage, I invite some fur buyers. I am offered for one fox hide, eleven hundred dollars; for another eight hundred dollars. I made a lump sale of all the furs for thirty-two hundred and fifty dollars. We remained in Edmonton a few days shopping and buying provisions. We take the mail hack for Athabaska Landing. Here we take the steamer for the head of Slave lake. Arriving here, we round up our ponies, pack, and are off for camp. We arrive at camp in ten days.

Dan now proceeds to make a diagnosis in our cases, and hands down this ruling: "I find it is necessary to fumigate your clothing and dip you both, as your entire systems are infested with that deadly germ, "The Settlement." Mrs. Parker tells us that she fears our cabins are haunted. I asked why, and she said: "I imagine I can hear voices laughing and joking." I ask her if these voices resembled our own conversation carried on last winter. She said, "I believe they did." I then explained to her that the voices she heard were our own conversations carried on by ourselves last winter, and it being so cold then, they froze up; and the weather now being warm, these conversations are thawing out. My theory was accepted.

WINDBOUND ON SLAVE LAKE. MISS COOK HOLDING MOOSE HORNS.

A TRIP TO THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

Dan and I now take stock. We are very well satisfied with our achievements so far in Canada. My daughter and I want to make a trip to Great Slave Lake. Dan says he and the Indian will take care of the ranch. We get our canvas boat, put it in our little river here, load it with grub, and camp equipage, get in, and push off. Mr. and Mrs. Parker tell us to write them every day. We have a sail, oars, paddle and pole. We use only a paddle until we pass into a larger river. We do not need it much here only to keep the boat straight, as the current is very swift. We make forty to sixty miles a day. We come into a lake, see some tents, but do not stop; pass out of the lake, and on down the river. This is a wild country, and we see lots of game. In five days we reach Great Slave Lake. Here we take a steamer for Fort Reliance. Here we take our canoe again, with an Indian for a guide. We go east through lakes, creeks and rivers, until we come to the head of Baker lake. This is not far from Hudson Bay.

We turn back to Fort Reliance and here catch a steamer for Fort Rae. Our guide tells us we can pass on into Great Bear lake. Arriving in Great Bear lake, we go into camp. Here we go inland a short distance, and see the barren lands. Here we see some Eskimo. Back to our boat, we turn west, coasting along Great Bear Lake. We come to McVickar Bay. We sail across this; it is ten miles wide. We coast on west. This lake is so shallow we have to keep far out in places. Fish are swarming in the water, and there are many varieties. We come to Bear river and pass down its course. It is a succession of rapids. We come out into the Mackenzie river at Fort Norman.

The river here is more than a mile wide. We pass on down to the head of the delta. This delta is twenty miles wide at high tide. This tide water is out of the Arctic ocean which we can see in the distance. We have now reached our goal on this trip.

We now think of our ranch, and how we are going to manage to get back. Fortunately we see a steamer going up the river; we hail it, and our outfit is soon all on board. This takes us back to Fort Simpson. Here we bid farewell to our guide, as he wants to go on up the river to his home. We employ another guide. He takes us up the Liard river, passing Fort Liard. We pass on into Nelson river. At Fort Nelson we have to abandon our boat as the river is freezing. We arrange with an Indian to take us across to our ranch with a dog sleigh. From here on to our ranch we suffer some with the cold. We arrive at our ranch. Dan now wants to know if we will be willing to remain in camp until spring.

INFORMATION OTHER THAN YOU HAVE HERE THAT YOU WOULD NEED FIRST, OR LAST IF YOU WOULD GO TO CANADA.

A map, the land laws, laws on settlers' effects; entering Canada, railroad rates and how to get them. The Senate report of 1907. For the above, address the Hon. Secretary of the Interior, ttawa, Ontario, Canada.

For the game laws, apply to the Chief Game Warden at the Capital of the province that you would visit. The above gentlemen will treat

you with the utmost courtesy. The Canadian Government has agents scattered over the United States from whom you can secure railroad rates. To find the agent nearest you I would address a letter to the Hon. Superintendent of Immigration, Ottawa, Canada. You can secure very low rates if you will apply to these agents.

For information regarding British Columbia, address the Superintendent of Immigration, at Victoria, B. C. If you go to Canada to trap and hunt, I would advise you to fully post yourself on the laws regarding the same. If you are a settler taking in stock, first look well to the laws regarding same. Do this before you go in.

I have some Canadian laws, but if I should quote them here they might be changed when you go in and mislead you. When you go in you will want the latest laws. You need not have any scruples as regards treatment, for there is not a country on the face of the earth where you will receive more courteous and fair treatment than in Canada.

If you visit Canada and stop in a town, inquire if there is an Immigration building; if there is one, go there. If there is an auction sales-yard for live stock, visit it. If you want to go to the Peace river country, go to Edmonton to outfit. Some might tell you to go on west of Edmonton to Medicine Lodge to outfit. I would not recommend that because that is a newer place, and your outfit would cost you more than at Edmonton. Then some might tell you to go straight north from Medicine Lodge to the Peace river. Now by this time there may be a summer trail that you could get over with horses, but not with wagons, or buggy. If you would go to look at the country, and return, then take two horses—one to ride and one to pack. One pack horse would do for two men. Take only a small amount of grub, as you will find trading posts where you can replenish your grub sack. Now if you were going to stay, then get a big pair of oxen; (use ox harness, not a yoke.) put on forty hundred to Athabaka Landing. There ship by steamer to Shaw's Point Landing on Lesser Slave Lake all your load, except just grub enough to run you to that point. Then take it very slow, and you can now pull it to Peace river. The freight rates from Athabaska Landing to Shaw's Point Landing are one dollar—fifty cents per hundred. From Edmonton to Fort St. John you will pay twenty-five cents per pound for any freight.

Never get in a hurry. Give your stock plenty of time to rest and graze. If you have a wagon, take your milk cows along. Then when you stop your big oxen will do your plowing; then you could get land to break at five dollars per acre from your neighbor. Never start to Peace river with a light hack or buggy.

If you would trap or hunt any, be sure to see the game warden at Edmonton before starting. If you take stock into Canada, you must keep them in your possession twelve months before you can sell them. Don't buy or sell any wild animals, furs, pelts, heads, or horns of wild animals, until you have seen the Chief Game Warden about a license for doing so. For prices of raw furs, address R. S. Robinson, 150 to 152 Pacific Ave., East, Winnipeg, Canada.

I would not advise men to go to Canada for the purpose alone of seeking employment. While there is a good demand for labor there from April 1 to November 1, there would be little to do from Novem-

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ber to April.

The cream of Canada is the southern part of Saskatchewan and Alberta. That is the wheat belt. If you must have land in the settled portions, then I would say, go to that spot where the Canadian Northern railroad crosses the line between Saskatchewan and Alberta; and look over the country eat, west, and north for a hundred miles. If you can't find what you want there, you will have to go to the Peace river to get prairie land. If I was going to do that, I would buy a cheap pony at that point. Then as you travel over that conutry you might pick up a cheaper Peace river outfit; then go on to Edmonton to make a start for Peace river. The above plan would be for a new filing. If you want improved land in the finest farming belt in Canada, go to Regina in Saskatchewan, west to Moose Jaw, then north to Saskatoon.

In conclusion, I have not intended to brag on Canada, or knock against it. I have told the facts as I saw them, and according to my own ideas of it, and I trust this information will be of service to the reader. And if by chance you should find my ranch, you will not need a key, but you will find a latch string on the outside of the door.

I am, very respectfully,

JIM M. COOK.

A COW BOY'S IDEA OF A FREE LAND.

A Country beyond the range of the silk hat man
A Country beyond the range of the goggle-eyed society man;
A Country beyond the range of the bull-pup, hobble skirt dame.
A Country beyond the range of the lying grafter man,
A Country beyond the range of the sugar coated middle man.
A Country where the poor man does not wear his hat in his hand,
A Country where there are no parasites in the form of man;
A Country where the poor man does command.
A man who can make a hand, in this land, is the man in demand.

By JIM M. COOK,
A Texas Man.

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